The Christian Church

Presented to Rev. Kinslow by Homer & Rena Settle following the death of Mrs Ella Settle - 3-23-1962

Mrs. Ella Settle

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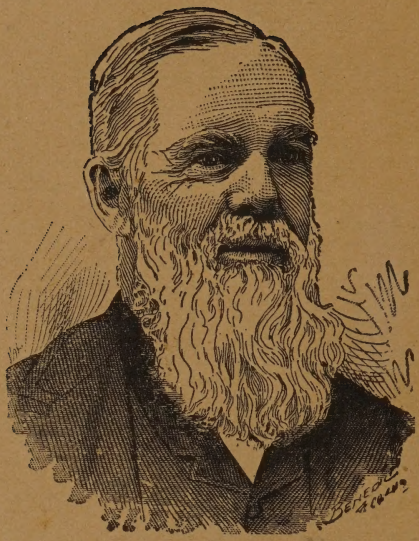

A. D. Williams.

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THE

Christian Church

—AND—

ITS INSTITUTIONS.

BY A. D. WILLIAMS, D. D.

OWENSVILLE, INDIANA.
GENERAL BAPTIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.
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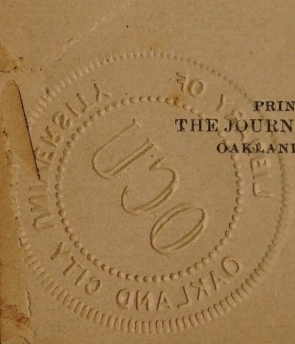

PREFATORY.

Theology may be classified as; first, Systematic Theology; second, Practical Theology; third, Organic Theology. The first concerns itself with the exoteric or outward doctrines of Christianity, considered simply as an intellectual system. The second deals with what Christianity does for man, in the approach of its doctrines to his intelligence, in the inworkings of the Divine Life in his experiences, and its outworking in his conduct and character. The third considers the organic forms and methods through which Christianity manifests itself, in the church and its institutions.

Though issued first in the order of time, because circumstances seemed to call for it, this volume is logically the third and last of the series, dealing with Organic Theology, under the title of THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND ITS INSTITUTIONS. If life is spared long enough, it is hoped to issue a volume on each of the other branches of theology. The second is practically of greater importance, because it has nowhere been treated by itself, while there is hardly an end to the works on systematic theology, and also because most vital in itself.

The object of this work is to present the doctrines of organic Christianity in so clear a light that they can easily be understood by common readers, and so conclusively that they cannot be gainsaid by the learned. In going over so wide a range of subjects, the discussions have necessarily had to be brief. But much space has been saved, for the most part, by simply presenting the true doctrine, and the reasons therefor, without giving the history of the doctrines, or directly combating false doctrines.

It is no matter whether a doctrine or an observance has come down in uninterrupted succession from Christ and the apostles. The only important question concerns simply whether it is the same doctrine they preached and the same observance they practiced. At the bank, the question is not where you get your money, but simply is it genuine. Nor does it matter what a false doctrine is, provided you sufficiently establish the true one. Only occasionally is it necessary to expose a false doctrine—so as to get a fair hearing for the true one.

It is a matter for congratulation that the sentiments of this book appeal so directly and forcibly to the common apprehension. Unless the mind has been drilled into deep-rooted prejudices, there is everywhere a ready response—"Yes, that is so!" It is a pleasure, too, that the Bible gives these discussions such abundant and ready support. Where

we have sometimes thought to go alone, the Bible is ready to lead us, if we are prepared to yield our selves to its guidance. Human reason has its province, and is not hindered from anything it can do—only helped. But the divine inspiration illumines the path far on beyond.

The position of the General Baptists is altogether unique. Concerning the subjects and mode of baptism, they are out and out baptists. Concerning communion, they believe in no other prerequisites than a converted heart and a consecrated life. Concerning the atonement, they reject Calvinism in all its forms, and believe in a free will and a free salvation. They are therefore an Arminian, free communion baptist section of the Great Christian Church.

Concerning church government, they are not so loose as to be inefficient, nor so centralized as to lord it over God's heritage. The church manages its own affairs, but unites with other churches in associations, and these in a general association, for carrying on affairs beyond its individual reach, and there is a presbytery for the upbuilding, protection and government of its ministry.

These peculiar features are along the line of popular thought. The great mass of the people think the same things, when they examine the Bible, and think of these subjects at all. Our preachers have little else to do than to make a clear statement and

a forcible presentation of our position. There are multitudes of people everywhere, who can stand on no other platform, without a great deal of mental reservation, or yielding to a vast amount of special pleading.

The principal thing, therefore, that our people have to do is thoroughly to post themselves as to our doctrines and usages, and address themselves earnestly to their advancement. To aid them in this, is the object of this work.

Oakland City College, June, 1894.

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The Christian Church and Its Institutions.

BOOK FIRST.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

I—ITS NAME AND THE USES OF IT.

In the New Testament, the church is called *Ekklesia*, a Greek word composed of *Kaleo*, to call and *Ek*, from, or out of. In its substantive form, it means a company or assembly, summoned from among the people, and was so used among both the Greeks and the Jews. As applied to the church, it means a company or assembly of Christians, called out from the darkness and thraldom of sin into the marvellous light and liberty of the gospel. It is used:—

1. To distinguish a local company or assembly of Christians. In this application, it does not signify that all of them are actually Christians, but only that they are accepted as such. The following are instances of this use. Acts 8:1.—"There was a great persecution against the church at Jerusalem." Acts 13:1.—"There were in the church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers." 1 Cor.

1:2.—"The church of God, which is at Corinth." Acts 20:17.—"He sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church." 2 Thess. 1:1.—"Unto the church of the Thessalonians." Rom. 16:5.—"Greet the church that is in their house." Col. 4:15.—"Salute the church that is in Nymphas' house." Rev. 2:1, and following,—"To the angel of the church of Ephesus," and Smyrna, Pergamos, and the rest of the seven churches.

In this sense, the name is frequently used in the plural. Acts 9:31.—"Then had the churches rest through all Judea." Acts 15:41. — "Paul went through Syria, confirming the churches." 1 Cor. 16:1.—"As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia." Verse 19.—"Churches of Asia salute you." 2 Cor. 8:1.—"The grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia." Gal. 1:22.—"Were unknown by face to the churches of Judea." Rev. 1.4 —"To the seven churches of Asia."

2. But the word is used to designate, in a general sense, the whole of the churches everywhere. Eph. 1:22.—"Gave him to be head over all the church." Eph. 3:10.—"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." Phil. 3:16.—"Concerning zeal, persecuting the church." Col. 1:18.—"He is head of the body, the church." 1 Cor. 12:28.—"God hath set some in the church, first apostles," etc. Eph. 5:13.—"Even as Christ is the head of the church." Verse 24.—"The church is subject to Christ."

3. Beyond this, it is used to designate not any visible assembly or organization, nor merely the aggregate of such, but the sum total of all Christ's

children. Acts 20:28.—"The church of God, which He, (Christ,) hath purchased with his own blood." This can hardly include any not "purchased," even though numbered with a visible church, and it must include all who are purchased, all who are Christ's, even though never members of any outward organization. Eph. 5:25–27.—"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." This can hardly be said of any visible, organized church. Heb. 12:22, 23.—"But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born. which are written in heaven."

When the Bible speaks of the whole church, as a unit, it most frequently calls it simply "The Church." In seven instances—Acts 20:28, 1 Cor. 1: 2, 10:32, 11:22, and 15:9, Gal. 1:13, and 1 Tim. 3:5—it is called "The Church of God." But in most of them with some local designation, expressed or implied, as, 1 Cor. 1:2, "The Church of God which is at Corinth." Still, the plain inference is that "Church of God" is a proper appellation of the whole church. In two cases—Rom. 16:16, and 1 Cor. 11:16—"Churches of Christ" is used, with the same local application and general inference.

But, in nearly every case, where a single local church is intended, it is accompanied by some adjective term, or terms, descriptive of the locality,

as—"the church at Jerusalem," Acts 8:1—"the church at Babylon," 1 Pet. 5:13—"the church of Laodicea," Col. 4:16. In other cases, it is described by the house in which it meets, or the family to which most of its members belong, as, Rom. 16:5, "the church that is in their house."—Col. 4:15, "the church which is in Nymphas' house.—1 Cor. 16:19, "Aquilla and Priscilla with the church that is in their house."

In another, and somewhat notable instance, Rom. 16:4, Paul calls churches composed of gentiles, "the churches of the gentiles," distinguishing one portion of the church by the nationality of its members. Of course, any one else might with the same propriety speak of the churches of the Jews, or of the Germans, or the Anglo Saxons, or any other nationality. Nor is this all. Paul, in Gal. 1:22, speaks also of a geographical locality in the same way—"the churches of Judea." To this, John adds another example "the seven churches which are in Asia."

From these examples, it will be seen that the apostles did not hesitate to designate particular churches, or a class of churches, (such as the gentile churches of Asia,) by such descriptive term, or terms, as fitly described them. They were intent on being understood, and they applied such terms to each church, or class of churches, of which they spoke, as would be easiest understood by their readers. And, would they not have continued to do the same, had they lived until other developments had added other distinguishing characteristics to various of the churches? If so, they would have done just what has been done, in respect to the de-

scriptions, (names,) of the various bodies of Christians now extant.

But, it must be distinctly remembered that no one of these local, geographical, or national parts of the church had any exclusive right to the generic name or character of "The Church," "Church of God," "Church of Christ," or its synonym, "Christian." Each was a part of "The Church," "The Church of God," "The Church of Christ," or "Christian Church." But it could not assume any exclusive use of either of these designations, without arrogating to exclude and unchurch all the rest. If either of them should claim to do this, its assumption and bigotry would be very noticeable.

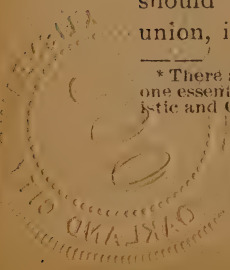
From the examples given, another thing will also be seen. The apostles did not fix upon any one single name for the church. With them, it was most frequently simply "The Church." But some times it was the Church or Churches of God. At others it, was the Church or Churches of Christ, or of Asia, or Galatia, of Judea, Macedonia, the gentiles, etc. Either was allowable. Neither had any exclusive title. Names, evidently, did not have so much importance to them, as they do to some moderns. When things were so fittingly described that they were understood and appreciated, all importance that can possibly attach to any name was secured.

It does not follow that in no case is one name better than another. Whichever one best describes and most clearly and fully conveys the meaning intended, is obviously best. Among the various parts or sections of Christ's Church, "General Baptists" is the best for us, because it best describes us to

the world at large. Baptists are everywhere known and recognized as evangelical Christians, believing that immersion is essential to the action of baptism. General is equally known as expressive of a general atonement, including free will and free salvation, and an actual and spiritual experience of the Divine Life. Free communion is not so fully expressed in it, and yet it has a strong squinting in the direction of a "general" table for all Christ's people—all His church. But, beyond this, we have come to be known and read of all men, where we are known at all, as out and out free communionists—both out and baptists, and also out and out free communionists, a combination that some fancy cannot exist together. But, with us, it certainly does. If any doubt, let them come and see.

At the same time, it is everywhere understood, that, in common with other denominations, we claim to be a part of the great General Assembly and Church of the First Born. It may not be so generally understood, that we claim to be only a part of said church. We recognize other denominations, with whatever faults they may have, as equally with ourselves parts of it. Hence one of the grounds of our free communion.

But, where Separate or Freewill, or Free, or Free Christian, or United* Baptists has been long in use, or for any reason is preferred, and is expressive of substantially the same doctrines, we see no necessity for discarding such name, nor why it should be any bar to fellowship, or even organic union, if otherwise desirable, Let each party be



* There are two peoples in the country called United Baptists—one essentially Arminian and Free Communion, the other Calvinistic and Close Communion.

fully pursuaded in its own mind, and continue to use the name of its own choice.

II—ITS ANTECEDENTS.

In some sense, God has had a church in the world, ever since he promised that the seed of Eve should bruise the serpent's head,—Gen. 3:15. Yet it was then but dimly outlined, and but slowly developed for many ages. Only seer and prophet saw its significance. And yet, there has probably been from the first an assembly or company of those who loved and served God, to the extent of their opportunities.

Fifteen hundred years later, the covenant was renewed to Noah, Gen. 3:18. and the Patriarch became its preacher of righteousness, 2 Pet. 2:5. Five hundred years after that, it was again renewed to Abraham, in the plain of Mamre. On the face of it, as recorded in Genesis, chapters fourteen and fifteen, it only promised the land of Canaan and an innumerable progeny. But the song of Zacharias, Luke 1:67-69, gave it a broader and a spiritual meaning. Peter, in his sermon in the temple, Acts 3:22, 25, makes it still plainer that this promise includes "that prophet," which is Christ, and so all who should come to God through him. Paul confirms this, in Gal. 3:16,—"He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, which is Christ."

After four hundred years more, Gal. 3:17, the church was more fully developed under and by Moses. Stephen, in his sermon, Acts 7:38, calls

it "the church in the wilderness." It was a combined church and state, that has made the Jews the most singular people of the world. In this Theocracy, the external and the internal, the worldly and the spiritual, were peculiarly blended, fitted by outward symbol and lessened moral requirement to the hardened heart and dull perceptions of the people, but with such necessary preponderance of the outward, that when Christ came it was little better than a sepulchre, full of the dead bones of formalism—a thing ready to die, because it had not life enough to live. Judaism since then has been only a sheeted skeleton.

But, while these were antecedents and forerunners of the Christian Church, they were none of them that church itself. When the last one of them was ready to die, Christ says to Peter, Mat. 16:18, "I will build my church"—a church still unbuilt, and that "I will build," still in the future, not one that had been built for four thousand or one thousand years before. Judaism was built on Moses and the Prophets. This church was to be built on Jesus Christ. Resemblances there were. But they were not identical. The new was to take the place of the others. But still, it was new, and not old. It was a "New Testament," a new dispensation, and not an old one, a new church, with characteristics of its own, standing on its own foundation, and erected by its own "Master Builder." Antetypes there had been. But the new institutions were not reproductions. With resemblances at some points, there were wide divergencies at others, so that the existence of any feature in one does not guarantee its reappearance in a

newer one—comes nearer guaranteeing that it will not appear in the same form.

III—TRANSITION.

Judaism was still in existence, and in authority, when John the Baptist came, preaching—"The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"—not has come, but is just about to come. He cried—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord," because it was not prepared, and the Lord was soon to need it. He was nigh, even at the door. The approaching oncoming was so noticeable, that priests and levites interrogated him—"Who art thou?" "Art thou that prophet?" But he confessed — "I am not the Christ." The church of Christ was not yet set up.

John, too, instituted a baptism. It is a disputed question whether Jewish proselyte baptism was then in existence. But it does not matter. John's baptism was peculiar and original enough to stand by itself, Jesus also afterwards baptized, by his disciples. He moreover called the twelve, and afterwards the seventy, while an increasing number allied themselves to him, and so a company, or in some sense an assembly, was formed. And yet, it was after all this that he said to Peter—"I will (hereafter) build my church." Materials were accumulating. The foundation was pointed out. But the building was not yet erected.

Later still, the Lord's Supper is instituted. After the resurrection, the disciples gather courage, and congregate together, until "more than five hundred," 1 Cor. 15:6, are with the Master at once—

enough for a goodly church. But still, there is no statement of a finished church. If there was one, we have no information on the subject. On the other hand, after all this was past, at the Ascension, Jesus virtually tells them, Luke 24:49, that the church is not completed, ready for business—"Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high!" The building was well advanced. But it was not ready for the dedication. That came on the day of Pentecost, when "they were filled with the Holy Ghost."

Now the transition is over. Judaism is no more. Christ's Church is finished, and set up "in the tops of the mountains." For the first time, we have the statement of a church as actually existing, and not in the future, in the announcement, Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be, (are,) saved."

IV—ORGANIZATION AND OFFICERS.

The habit at that time did not require such specific and minute processes of organization as are common now. And then, it is by no means certain that all the processes employed are given us. Whether James, as the then leading apostle, formally called the disciples together, and presided as moderator, and Peter acted as clerk, we do not know. It is perhaps quite as likely that they were drawn together by a powerful internal affinity, through which they could not well keep apart. Whether they wrote out a covenant and a constitution, with several whereases, doth not appear—on-

ly it is doubtful if they did anything of the kind.

But, somehow, they got together, and were bound together by stronger ties than sealed documents or civil compacts—so strong that Nero's edicts or his executioner's instruments of torture or of death could not break them. So strong a bond of union, and so clear a line of division between the church and the world, would be very satisfactory anywhere now. It would be hard to better it. It was the very gist and substance of the matter, whether all the minutiae of modern form was observed or not.

As to the form of government, it is nowhere explicitly laid down. The apostles were, perhaps, instinctively given pre-eminence, and, at first, James seems to have been allowed some prominence among them, as in the first Council, at Jerusalem, Acts 15:4-31. Afterwards, Paul became most prominent of all, as the apostle to the Gentiles. This appears, in the case of the eleven, to have been accorded them on account of their selection by the Master, and in the case of Paul, because of his miraculous selection by the Master, and because of the force of his overmastering abilities, and the success of his unparalleled labors.

For some considerable time, as shown by the recently discovered "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," and contrary to a quite common belief, the name, "apostle," was retained in the church. But it came to be assumed only by a sort of self-appointed and self-directed itinerants, who, from their untrust worthy character, fell into disrepute, and the title ceased to be used.*

Outside of apostles, the first officers of the church

* THE TEACHING, etc., Section II.

appear to have been quite numerous. Paul, 1 Cor. 12:28, enumerates as follows:—"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." In another place, Eph. 4:11, he enumerates—"Some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." In other places, elders, bishops and deacons are named. It would seem that a large number had some prominent place in the early church, according as their abilities and attainments furnished them with recognized "gifts" for the same. Perhaps it would be an improvement now, if more places were recognized in the church for more of its individual gifts, so that every one having some kind of a gift should not feel it necessary to crowd into the ministry, thus spoiling a good deacon, or exhorter, or some other "gift," to make a poor preacher.

However this may be, it was not long before many of these gifts, ceased, as specific offices in the church. In fact, all of them did so, except elders (*presbuteroi*,) bishops (*episcopoi*,) and deacons. It is possible, and probable, that different names were applied to the same office. It is also probable that several of what at first were special gifts came in time to be exercised by the same person, and to be considered as belonging to the same office.

At first, elder and bishop were used interchangably, to designate the same office, and were applied to the same person. Thus Paul, Acts 20:17, "sent to Ephesus, and called the elders, (*presbuterous*,) of the church." But, in addressing them, "when they had come," verse 28, he calls them "over-

seers," (*episcopous*, or bishops,) showing that both titles were alike applicable to them. Again, Titus 1:5, Paul declares that he left Titus in Crete, among other things, to "ordain elders, (*presbuterous*,) in every city." He then proceeds to define their qualifications, and in doing so, verse 7, says:—"For a bishop, (*episcopon*,) must be blameless," etc., again showing these terms to be interchangeable.

Of these terms, while both are Greek, presbuteros had for some time been in use among the Jews,* as indicative of their prominent men, as "chief priests and elders," (*presbuteroi*,) in Mat. 27:20, and in many other places, while episcopos had been in use among the Greeks for a similar purpose. Hence the Jewish Christians generally used presbuteros; while Paul, who perhaps learned his Greek from a different source, frequently follows the more common Grecian or Athenian usage, and uses episcopos. Presbuteros is founded on the idea of age, or veneration, and episcopos on that of oversight, or official superintendence. But out of this gradually grew the idea of pre-eminence among his fellows, that afterwards was attached to the idea and office of a bishop. It is in this way, in connection with a natural love of pre-eminence, that what was at first but one office with two names came to be accepted as two distinct offices, the one exercising oversight or supremacy over the other, instead of both alike over the church.

Of the other earlier offices, or gifts, that of "prophet" seems to have corresponded nearly with

* Derived no doubt from the fact that the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek had used presbuteros for that purpose.

our exhorter, speaking with impromptu earnestness and enthusiasm, while a "teacher," (*didaskelos*,) was one who spoke with more care and preparation. In the Greek heathen usage, a prophet was more an expositor of the Gods, like the soothsayers, than a foreteller of events, while a didaskalos was a calm and studied teacher, like Socrates or Plato. But, in later Christian usage, the exhorting and teaching are both mostly left to the minister. Whether the giving up of the special "gifts" of the prophet" and "teacher" is a good thing, may be a question. The office of "governments," of ruling as well as teaching elders, has also been turned over to the ministry. The exercise of the two gifts by the same person sometimes occurred in early times, if not from the beginning. 1 Tim. 5:17.—"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor (also) in word and doctrine." From the first, the "evangelist" has been little, or more, than a traveling presbuteros, and is today.

Deacons were originally chosen by the church, under the direction of the apostles, and ordained by the apostles, to attend to the financial affairs of the church. Acts 6:1-6.—"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said: It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may ap-

point over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."

A more specific and definite purpose, it would be difficult to state. It is to attend to financial affairs—nothing more, nothing less, and especially to allow the ministry to give itself "continually to prayer and the ministry of the word." The deacons were to attend altogether to the finances, the ministry altogether to the preaching. But, it has come to pass in these last days, that church finances are about the last things deacons meddle with, and generally, if they are managed at all as they should be, the church must appoint a Finance Committee, to do just exactly the things the apostles ordained deacons to do, and leave the deacons to do something they were not ordained to do.

It is urged that Stephen soon commenced preaching, and so he must have understood that to be a part of his duty, as a deacon. But how could he, when he had just been told so distinctly to the contrary? It seems, however, that Stephen found himself called to the ministry, just as some deacons do nowadays—and finance committee men, too—and was not disobedient to the heavenly call. There is nothing to prevent a deacon, if called of God, and especially if, like Stephen, he was "full of faith and of power," from entering the ministry.

And, it may have been no mistake, in his first being made a deacon. The experience of dealing with human nature in the church finances may be a good preparation for dealing with as a minister of the word. Besides, if Stephen, as a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, successfully managed the men and "widows" of the "daily ministration," and inaugurated an efficient system of church finances—as it seems some one did, from the cessation of the "murmuring,"—training his associates to follow it out after him, he thereby proved himself so large, and strong, and good, a man, as to be eminently fitted for ministerial work. The diaconate, well and faithfully used, may be a good stepping-stone to the ministry. It may be the preparatory work by which God sees best to fit him for it. And then, perhaps no one else could at the time have managed the deacon's work as well.

As the diaconate is now, it has dropped almost the entire purpose for which it was instituted, and has appropriated to itself the work of another office in the primitive chorch, that of "helps," and also a part of the duties of another, that of "governments." As such, it may not be altogether without authority, in helping the pastor in administering the sacrament, in visiting the sick and wayward, and in keeping up the social meetings of the church. It may also be said that the tendency of the diaconate in this direction began early, almost before the disappearance of apostolic direction. Paul's direction concerning deacons, in 1 Tim. 3:8-13, in approximating it so nearly to that concerning the ministry, points somewhat in this direction. And yet, while there is at least some semblance of an

enlargement of duties, there is certainly no authority for the abandonment of the duties for which it was so particularly and definitely originated. Those duties, deacons may perhaps properly do. But these may not legitimately nor rightfully be left undone.

Though no mention is made of them in the New Testament, there must necessarily have been, in each church or council, some officer corresponding to what we now call moderator, and others corresponding to clerk, and treasurer. But, while they are officers in an important sense, as being chosen, formally or informally, to perform a specific work, yet they are not officers in the same sense as the ministry and diaconate. They have some distinction, but are more servants than officers, chosen tempora rily to perform a passing service, rather than selected to hold an independent position by a life-tenure.

The pastorate is a similar position, chosen for a temporary service, longer or shorter, but restricted to a necessity of being selected from a limited class —the ministry. It may be a question whether acting deacons should not be selected in the same way —from those ordained, or to be ordained, as deacons, but to serve any particular church only at its election, and for such longer or shorter period as it may determine. There is no reason why a deacon should be a deacon of any particular church for life, more than there is that a pastor should be a pastor of a church for life. If elected for a definite time, it would avoid many difficulties. Of course, like a pastor, he might be re-elected.

Of the same nature are an indefinite number of

committees, including delegates and corresponding messengers, which the church may appoint to do particular things for it. Generally, their acts require the subsequent sanction of the church, before they are of binding authority. But in some cases they are delegated with the full power of the church, to act for it and in its place, when their acts are final. Yet, even then, it must be clear that they have acted entirely within the province of the power delegated to them. A church has original power, to act as it pleases, except as to the official standing of elders and deacons, which at first was assumed by the apostles, and afterwards exercised by the presbytery. But a committee, delegation, messenger, or even a moderator, clerk, treasurer, pastor or deacon, has no authority to act in church matters outside of its or his specifically delegated or recognized power, given it by the church.

V—ITS MINISTRY.*

While the ministry of the early church was divided into so many offices, we have practically contracted them into only two, the elder, or bishop, and the deacon. But, we have not so much abolished the offices, as turned over the duties of most of them to the one officer. Hence, whenever we

* The Ministry is sometimes treated as one of the institutions of the church. But it is rather a part of itself. It is a part of its membership, and shares with the other members in all of their duties and responsibilities. Its only difference is its great prominence. It may be called the tongue and the feet, but it is still only a part of that body—the church—which the spiritual life uses for the conquest of the world. Hence it belongs among the elements of the church itself, rather than among its institutions.

find a brother who has a gift for preaching, or pastoring, or governing, or exhorting, or teaching, or tongues, (is a "good talker,") we forthwith ordain him to the one office.

So it is, therefore, that in the discussion of the Duties of the Ministry, we are compelled to enumerate some that conflict more or less with each other, and many that can never be found, in any marked degree, in any one man. One is a good preacher, but not much at exhorting; another is a good pastor, (overseer or bishop,) but only an indifferent preacher; another is a boanerges as an exhorter, but not a success in teaching; and another is a powerful evangelist, who preaches himself empty in three weeks, and would lose his power in six; while the head of the good talker is often as empty of thoughts as his mouth is full of words.

I.—CALLED OF GOD.

At the threshold of all these, is the injunction, Heb. 5:4.—"And no man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron." At the outset, the Master called first the twelve, and then the seventy; and, after the fall of Judas, the disciples recognized the need of a divine call, in the prayer and lot-casting, in the selection of Matthias, unto his "bishopric," as Peter puts it. In Acts 13:2, it is said—"The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." It had before, also, been said of Paul, Acts 19:14.—"He is a chosen vessel, to bear my name to the gentiles."

How men are called. is a question that has been

much discussed. Some look for dreams and visions, and signs. Some open the Bible at random for a significant text. Others wait for powerful impressions, that cannot well be resisted. If we turn to Aaron's case, we find, Ex. 28:1, that Aaron was called through Moses. God had first communicated to Moses his selection for the priesthood, and then Moses communicated the divine call to Aaron. So in these times, also, a real call is as often as otherwise communicated through the church, especially its more devoted and godly members. When a man gets very forward and solicitous to be ordained or licensed before the church is impressed, without his prompting, that he is called of God, there is reason to question whether he is really called of God, or only of his own ambition and conceit. The cases of a real call are few, in which the church is not as quick to recognize the call as the man himself.

Even thoughtful and candid men of the world are quite likely to become convinced of the call. They may not express it in words, but by their actions, in being ready to attend their preaching and to recognize them as ministers. But this is to be distinguished from the case where sceptical and unbelieving men are especially ready to hear ministers who depart from the spirituality and power-saving doctrines of the gospel. Whenever a minister does this, he is sure to have such a following, not because he has been called of God to preach the real gospel, but because he has been called of himself to preach "another gospel."

But God will communicate with the man himself, as well as with others, and in such a way that he

need feel no doubt about the matter. Yet the precise way of his doing so is not the same in all cases. Indeed, it is probable that no two are called in precisely the same way. God speaks, and has to speak, in a way that the person will understand. If he is looking for it in dreams and visions, it may come in that way, though it is not the highest class of minds that look for it in that way. More frequently, it comes in the form of an engrossing impression, that somehow takes possession of the mind, one can hardly tell how, but it is not easily shaken off, and is closely interwoven with all his religious exercises.

It may be resisted, as all God's calls may be. But it will be strongest in connection with his most deeply religious experiences, and weakest when he enjoys least of the divine life. He will be happiest when he is most disposed to yield to it, and most ill at ease when he is thinking of refusing obedience. If he gets near the Throne, that impression will come with a sweet reminder. If he gets far away from it, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel," will sound in his ears, and bring bitterness to his heart. The more he tries to rid himself of the impression, the stronger it becomes, until he decides not to yield, and flees toward Tarshish, or to yield, and walks in the path of obedience.

Sometimes one's own ambition and self-conceit may counterfeit God's call—for all good things may be counterfeited. When this is the case, it may be detected by this—"Is the call strongest when I am thinking most of myself and my personal ambition, or when I am lying lowest in humiliation and self

abasement?" The man of God may rightfully desire the office of a bishop, 1 Tim. 3:1, but this also may be counterfeited. Is it desired to climb to some height of personal attainment or distinction among men, or is it solely to lead souls to the Master? Is he willing to take the humblest place, or is there a lurking desire for place and preferment? Will he be tried in feelings if not put forward, or is he willing to stay on the lowest seat.

So, it is well to wait and "try the spirits," 1 John 4:1, until very sure "it is of God." If he is indeed speaking, and you put yourself near to his spirit, in a listening attitude, you will recognize his voice. It will be well, if it becomes a voice by day and a vision by night, until you are in no doubt —until, while it comes to you in a different way, you are as sure of it as Paul was of his call—until it becomes an abiding assurance—until it summons all your energies to do God's work—until you cannot rest, day nor night, only as you are in his work and winning souls to him—until, like Jeremiah, you will find—"His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay," (When a man can live near to God, and be at ease on his farm, or at his merchandise, it is doubtful if God has called him to the work of the ministry,)—until it asserts itself so spontaneously and powerfully that you cannot repress it if you would, and have not the least disposition to do it if you could—until it comes to be more than earthly possessions, more than even meat and drink, or clothes, to preach God's gospel of free grace to perishing sinners.

He who settles this matter by question of salary,

or social position, or dignity, or honor, or anything whatever in this line, has not so much as conceived that which is the first principle of a call to God's ministry, and has no more right to a place in it, than has "peanuts" for a place at the foot of God's throne, to make a living by selling chewing gum.

But one may have a call, revealed with more or less clearness and force, some time before it is his duty to enter upon the work. Moses evidently knew he was called of God to deliver his people before he slew the Egyptian. But he departed into Midian and remained there for years, before the fitting time had come, or the fitting preparation had been secured, for entering on the work. Samuel was called when but a child. But he did not enter on the work, until after years of preparation with Eli. Jesus called The Twelve three years before he permanently set them at their work, keeping them all this time under his own instruction—the best theological instruction any ministers ever had.

Paul knew he was called of God, when Jesus met him on the way to Damascus, and like any convert he at once set about telling what great things God had done for him, both in Damascus, and no doubt in Arabia, where he soon after went. But here follow six years, in which we have no account of him, save of a "fifteen days" sojourn in Jerusalem, Gal. 1:18. At the end of that time, Barnabas found him in his native city, Tarsus, Acts 11:25. What was he doing those six years? Undoubtedly, he lived a Christian life, and testified of, (preached,) Jesus. He could not have been idle. But he neither traveled nor raised up churches, as in all his after life. Nor can we suppose that

he was developed enough in Christian thought and experience to have written the eighth of Romans, or the fifteenth of first Corinthians, when he was first at Damascus. What can we more reasonably suppose than that he was studying and developing in his own mind the great truths of theology, of which he afterwards became the ablest expositor and defender—and perhaps also looking over some of those Grecian poets that he subsequently so effectively quoted on Mars Hill. Then follow one and probably two years in which he "taught," Acts 11:26, at Antioch before he was ordained, ten years after his conversion, Acts 13:3. The churches in those days were not in such hot haste to "lay hands" on men as some are now.

Neither Paul nor the Master felt as some young preachers, of more zeal than knowledge, do, that preachers are responsible for the souls that perish before they are prepared for their work. They are no more responsible for them than they are for those that perished before they were born. But. they *are* responsible for not doing the greater good they might do by means of a proper training. Their haste to get into the work has more of human ambition in it than of a true estimation of their responsibilities, and of what the Master is calling them to do.

Ministers who rightly understand their call, find it is first a call to "study," to prepare themselves for the work, that when they enter upon it they may be "thoroughly furnished" for it, 2 Tim. 3:17. It is only those who having eyes see not, and having ears hear not, who fail thus to understand it. These are like Ahimaz, 2 Sam. 18:22,

who foolishly ran ahead, before his "tidings" were "ready." It is far better to wait, as did Cushi.

II.—QUALIFICATIONS.

The first qualification for the ministry is a strong humanity—strong in body, strong in intellect, strong in sensibilities, strong in moral perceptions and power, and strong in will power. One may be more or less deficient in more or less of these, and yet be a useful minister. But, the more he has of them, other things being equal, the better minister he will make. But, if he be lacking in all of them, or in any considerable number of them, his place is hardly in the ministry. God does not call fools to make known the unsearchable riches of his truth. He saves the world by the foolishness of preaching, not by foolish preaching—between which there is a world of difference.

It is somewhat different with exhorters, who are not expected to bring forth and elaborate truth, but only to persuade men to accept what is already understood. It is different with "helps," who follow the guidance of a superior. It is different with "governments," who follow the clearly-defined path of usage. It is partially different wilh "evangelists," whose principal requisites are to set forth well-known truths in a forcible and convincing, if not startling manner. But pulpit "teachers" and "pastors" need the largest equipment of a strong and trained humanity.

A second requisite, and in the order of inherent importance the first, is a converted heart and a holy life. A preacher who believes may lead others to conversion. One whose whole life is hid

with Christ in God may bring others into the same precious experience. One whose whole being is absorbed in being like God and doing his will may conduct others into the same transcendently glorious and happy life. One whose whole nature is at one with God will lead men to be pre-eminently like God.

But, he can lead others no farther than he has gone himself. If he has never been in the inner courts, he cannot pilot others thither. How can he lead men into a path he has never traveled himself? Even an old Roman said, "If you wish me to weep, you must first weep yourself." The preacher needs be a pattern Christian—one living just as near to heaven as mortals ever get. A worldly, half-hearted ministry, non-experienced in the deep things of God, is at the bottom of the worldliness and weakness of the church. It is not much more than half Christian, because its ministry is not. "Like priest, like people."

A third requisite is stated by Paul—"Study." 2 Tim. 2:15. The best study is while one is young, in a Christian school. It discounts every other kind. Its objects are, first, to multiply brain power, which just so much multiplies all after efficiency, and, second, to gain knowledge, especially theological or religious knowledge. But there is much literary and secular knowledge that can be made almost equally useful. Every young minister neglecting this study is rolling up his talent, (capabilities,) in a napkin and hiding it. At the Judgment, the Master will require it, and what he might have made of it, at his hand—including the souls that thereby would have been saved, but

will not be. Let those who are neglecting this opportunity of study go and read again, in the light of the Judgment, the Master's declarations concerning the servant who so used, or rather misused, his talent.

This study obviously needs to include a knowledge of how to understand the Bible, and this involves a knowledge of the languages, (Greek and Hebrew,)in which it was written, and also includes hermaneutics or principles of interpretation—a knowledge of the principles of Christianity, and this is doctrinal and practical theology—a knowledge how to communicate those principles effectively, and this is homiletics and the composition and delivery of sermons, with voice culture, reading and elocution—a knowledge of how to reach and move men outside of the pulpit, and this is pastoral theology—a knowledge of how to make men feel they are sinners, and this is the science of human nature—a knowledge of how to make men feel that Christianity possesses what they need most of all, and this is the science of the divine life—a knowledge of the results, or last end of things, and this is eschatology. Along with it all there needs to be a knowledge of how to turn everything to the best account, and this is tact, a most important attainment. Then there is need to know how to command respect, and this requires a fair share of general culture, and a large share of worthiness of character.

If a young man plunges into the ministry ignorant of these things, he is handicapped from the very start, He needs to make unusual advances in acquiring them, while in fact, from lack of teach-

ers and opportunities, he can then make only unusually slow and unsatisfactory progress. Yet, if he has been unwise enough to place himself in such an unfavorable and unfortunate position, and he has become too old and hampered to retreat therefrom, he must do the best he can. He should have regular hours for study,—have an approved volume at hand for every spare hour, or half hour—must study on the street and by the wayside—should get every private teacher he can, and not be ashamed of it, either—must study while at work with his hands—study every possible moment, and with the most intense earnestness—to come as near as he can to making up his deficiences—which he can only approximately do, and go halting and crippled to the end.

A church or people cannot well inflict a greater injury upon a young preacher—crude in thought and undeveloped in brain-power, as all young men from necessity are—than to urge and crowd him into the active ministry before he has developed his brain-power and learned to think in a clear, strong and effective manner. In consequence, he will go crippled and hobbling along all through life, and never gain the place, or do the good, God gave him the possibility to do, and so intended he should do—and will call him to account at the Judgment for not doing. And then, the unkindest cut of all is that the same people, when another comes along who has been wise enough to improve his opportunities, will incontinently desert him for the newcomer. Young preachers, who neglect their early opportunities of study, are laying up for themselves the bitterest regret in after life, when it will be too late to remedy it—even in long eternity.

Another qualification is fidelity, to both God and man. The most sacred interests are intrusted to his hands. Angels never had a worthier and higher mission to fulfil. He is doing a work higher than theirs—in Christ's name, and in his stead, doing for him the work of the son of God. To make or mar a piece of exquisite human workmanship is a thing of large import. But to make or mar the destiny of a human soul is a thing of too great importance to be measured by human words. He needs be true in word and in deed, keeping himself faithful in all things, perfect in act and pure in thought, leaving no man to go up to the Judgment and say—"Had you understood your business better, and been more faithful to it, I should have been saved, while now I am lost—lost!"

Paul says to Timothy, 2 Tim. 4:5—"Make full proof of thy ministry." To do that, one must, as Paul says in another place, 1 Tim. 4:15, give himself "wholly" to it. He can't devote himself five-sevenths of his time to some other avocation. He must also give his mind wholly to this work, and not give its best energies to something else. Most of all, the minister must give his heart's best and entire energies to it. Religion is pre-eminently a thing of the heart, of the moral and spiritual nature, and no one can be an efficient minister, whose affections, and conscience, and sympathies, are not well-developed, and consecrated to the business of saving souls,

Nor must a minister be satisfied short of making "full proof" of his ministry, in its results. Leading men to conversion is one of the more prominent results of a true ministry, and no minister

should be contented unless this result follows his labor. But it is not the only result. Training converts to steadfastness and growth in Christian knowledge and grace is an equally important result. Leading them into the paths of holiness is an even higher result to be reached after. To keep out divisions and strife, and make Christians love one another, is a high and precious gift.

Generally, the minister, to make full proof of his ministry, must throw his entire possible force against the devil and sin, and for God and holiness. There must be no halfway thing about it—to be a good minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI—ITS MEMBERSHIP.

As "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. 5:25-27, so its membership evidently must be cleansed by the washing of regeneration, and therefore consist only of converted persons. In Col. 1:18, and in Eph. 5:23, Christ is called "the head of the body, the church." The body must be of the same nature as the head, must therefore be Christians, and not unconverted persons.

Again, in Heb. 12:23, the church is called "The general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven." The names of the unconverted are not written in heaven, and

so they cannot constitute any part of the real church, even though their names may be written on some earthly church book. So no one should be received into any local or visible church, except such as are judged to be regenerated, and so to be Christians.

On the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:47, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be (properly translated, *are*,) saved." The Lord adds to the church such as are converted, or saved. The adding of any others is not the Lord's doing, and not according to the Lord's way or will.

But, the membership of the church should not only be converted—"leaving the principles, (beginnings,) of the doctrine of Christ," Heb. 6:1, they should "go on unto perfection." The first thing is implicitly to do whatever God requires at our hands. 1 John 2:3, "We know that we love him, if we keep his commandments," and 1 John 5:3, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments," and his commandments are not grevious. And yet, they include much more than outward observances. They have respect to the inward as well as the outward, to the spiritual as well as the natural, to the being as well as the doing. They sweep the whole range of human action and experience.

And still, for all that, they may be obeyed. God asks nothing impossible from us. The moment God should ask anything of us that we cannot do, he would become a tyrant, and we would have no guilt for disobeying. It is impossible to conceive of a just God asking anything of us that we cannot do, and then punishing us eternally—or at all—

for not doing it. As his commands are not grievous, so they may be obeyed, and wonderful blessings will come to us in consequence of obeying them.

And this is what Paul meant when he said, Rom. 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." It is possible, therefore, to live without "condemnation," without transgressing any recognized law of God. And this is what brethren mean when they talk of "holiness," or "sanctification," or "living without sin"—without transgressing any known law of God. And this state is not only possible, but every Christian may attain unto it, and is most solemnly bound to do so—does attain unto it at conversion, and may and ought to retain it. What, can we claim to be children of God at all, when living in known disobedience to God! It is neither so difficult nor so uncommon an attainment as many suppose. We do not notice it so much because most of those having it do not boast of it, and frequently those boasting of it most are the poorest specimens of it.

But, this holiness, or santification, or living without sin, or whatever name you give it, is not a mere matter of outward obedience. It is "after the spirit," includes a regenerated and spiritual experience of the divine life, and brings "a peace that passeth all understanding, a joy that is like an overflowing stream." Yet, this enjoyment is not the natural effect of our obedience, but the spiritual effect—the undeserved grace God gives to his obedient children.

This experience is frequently, if not generally, mistaken both by the world and by those possessing it—especially where loud professions of it are made. From the frequent use of such terms as "holiness," "sanctification," "living without sin," outsiders come to expect more than the experience includes, and professors come to "think of themselves more highly than they ought to think." It is apparent that those making, or having, such experiences, are often and generally quite deficient—sometimes conspicuously so—in some very desirable and important elements of character. Because they are committing no perceived wrong does not insure that they understand all the right—does not make it certain that they are not ignorantly doing wrong things.

They may even be doing some wrong things, through not perceiving them to be wrong. And they may be kept from perceiving wrong things to be wrong, through inattention to the means of understanding the right, or perhaps more frequently through prejudices or perverted ideas of things. The pharisaic conception of themselves as "without sin" not unfrequently blinds them to their imperfections. If they are without sin, what need they more? The Laodicean church had come into this state—thought they were already so perfect as to need nothing more, but the apostle, Rev. 3:17, said to them, "Thou sayest I am rich and increased in goods, (holiness,) and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Besides this doing of no known wrong, there needs to be a clear—an increasingly clear—knowledge of

what is wrong, and so also of what is right. Hence, the apostle says, 2 Pet. 3:18, "Grow in . . . . . the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." So another apostle says, Heb. 5:12-13, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat; for every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe." He may be doing the best he knows—committing no known sin—and yet be very deficient in "the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ"—may be but a babe in Christ, and very unskilful in the word of righteousness—may still have a very imperfect Christian.

And we are to grow in grace, as well as knowledge. True knowledge, by leading us nearer to God, leads to his bestowment upon us of more grace. Of course, it is not knowledge abused, but rightly used. The two were intended to go together. They may to some degree be separated. But they need not be, and should not be. As knowledge gives us higher, and truer, and better conceptions of God and his government, so our obedience becomes more complete and higher, following which God will bestow upon us more of his favor. It is thus that we grow up, Eph. 4:13, "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Christianity is designed, not only to make us do as well as we know, which is its lowest, not highest, attainment, but, 1 Tim. 4:3, to "know the truth," and as much of it as is possible, and, Eph. 4:15, to "grow up into him," into the largest possible human enbodiment of the

divine character—to the highest possible stature of manhood. This alone is Christian perfection, in its highest and truest sense.

Sometimes the emphasis we put upon the first experiences of the Christian life, especially in revivals, blinds us to the importance of the higher knowledge and the richer, though not necessarily the more demonstrative, experiences of the maturer Christian. When we have to look back upon those first experiences as our happiest and best, we may be very sure we have not made such progress in the Christian life as we might and should have done. We are still babes in Christ. We have not left the "first principles." We know very little of the heighth and depth, and breadth of the love of God—of the attainments belonging to "a life hid with Christ in God."

Let no one, therefore, pride himself, or boast, because he is living without committing any known sin. That is well. But, there are still heights far above, and let him only be intent on attaining them.

Nor let any one think himself on the highest heights because he has received a new baptism of of the holy spirit. That also is well, and every way desirable. Every Christian who has not attained it should strive for it, even with an agony of earnestness. But still a second blessing should not suffice, and the assurance that will be content with it is not of God. There is no limit to the blessings of the Divine Life. There is no stage of Christian experience, in which we may not pray in faith and expectancy for a new baptism from on high. God is infinite, and there may be an infinitude of approaches towards him.

The steps of the Divine Life are something like this—1. Conversion and obedience to God's commands, without any intended or known transgression; 2. Growth in grace, (God's favor,) and in a constantly increasing knowledge of both the doctrine and experience of the Divine Life; 3. Successive baptisms of the holy spirit, increasing in power and effectiveness, as we grow in divine grace, and knowledge, and capacity: 4. Lessened power of both inward and outward besetments. The Divine Life has become so habitual and strong within us that temptation has little or no power over us.

This may be instantaneous, or gradual—instantaneous, when a powerful baptism of the holy spirit so fills us as at once to overbear the power of depravity—gradual, when we climb up to the same heighth through more gradual inbreathings of the Divine Life. The strength of depravity is never all destroyed instantaneously—only held in subjection by a superior force. Its destruction is a work of time, seldom, if ever, entirely accomplished until the "redemption of the body," Rom. 8:23, in the resurrection. But, like all disused characteristics, its power is constantly lessened, while that of grace is constantly or successively increased.

VII—ITS OBJECT.

It is without doubt true that one of the incidental objects of Christian Church is to supply the demands of the man's social nature—to furnish him congenial company. No man need go outside the church for company. He can find plenty of it in-

side. And it is the best company the world affords —men and women who are intent on being like God. As he is intent on the same thing, the company cannot be other than congenial. They are of like mind, and they are like in spirit. We have to associate more or less with the world, and such associations are sometimes pleasant. But still all we need, and the highest and best, is within the church.

But this is not its highest object, nor really a direct object at all. The first oject is to train men for heaven. Hence it is a school. Jesus is the Master, the Great Teacher. The members are disciples, or students, for this is what the word means. We are to learn of him. As in all schools, the students are not all of the same grade. Some are primary, some intermediate, some advanced. Teachers do not use the same methods with advanced and primary pupils, though illy informed preachers sometimes try to do it in the church. The babe in Christ needs milk; the old disciple strong meat.

We sometimes wonder why the convert is not taken straight to heaven as soon as he is fit for heaven. The fact is the young convert is not really fit for heaven—no more than a child is for the responsibilities of mature life, without having the advantages of years and training. He may be forced to do without them. But it is a misfortune. He is handicapped for all of life. So the training of the church will best fit us for the heaven beyond. We shall go there better equipped, better prepared to appreciate and enjoy all its glories. Even the trials we endure here, will make heaven richer to

us there. Without the training of the church on earth, we shall be somewhat like a color-blind child walking in a garden of flowers.

We sometimes sing of the man who went up to heaven without a single sheaf to add to the Master's garner. I don't like to sing it. It is better to be saved thus than not at all. But seems to me I should feel lonely there—no one saved by my influence. Others with crowds of sinners saved all around them,—I all alone. Better to live and learn and labor here, and go up at last with a whole armful of sheaves.

And then I don't care to go up there a mere babe in Christ, when all around me would be the stalwart sons of God. I should be like a primary pupil in the high school room. Better let me grow a while here into something nearer the full stature of the hevenly ones. I would like to walk nearer alongside, and not have to toddle along so far in the rear. It is better to go like a shock of corn fully ripe, than to go up immaturely among the glorified ones. It is a good thing for us that we have here this school-time for eternity, in which to grow up into Christ, to graduate and get ready for the great arena of life over in the beyond.

Preachers whose efforts are so exclusively evangelistic fail to grasp the idea of the church as a school, a means of Christian training. They are so occupied with the birth into the Christian life, that they neglect and undervalue the training into a full Christian stature. And this is the reason why we have so many dwarfed and sickly Christians—so many, as Hudibras says, who—

> "Condone the sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to,"

—so many that enjoy so little of the Christian life—so many that need re-converting every year—so many that do so little to bless and save the world—so many whose selfishness and penuriousness shut out from their vision the fact they are here "in Christ's stead," to do *his* work, so far as it is merely human, in the evangelizing of the world—so many that enjoy so little in being Christians, and to whom it is "so great a cross," to give anything, or do anything, for God and the salvation of man.

There need not be any of these weak and sickly Christans in the church. There ought not to be. Christ's truth and grace are sufficient to bring them all to the fullness of the Christian life. Intead of being invalids, or dwarfs, or cripples, they might be, and ought to be, healthy and hearty and stalwart Christians. They should be patterns of holiness, thoroughly posted, and thoroughly furnished in all all that belongs to godliness. It is one of the great objects of the church, through divine truth and grace, to make them such.

But, unfortunately, as Paul says, 1 Cor. 11:30, addressed especially to the church, "There are many weak and sickly among you." These weak and sickly ones were "among *you*"—in the church. And such have been in it from that day to this. Perhaps there have been even more of these than of full-grown and perfectly healthy Christians. They are living, as they often confess, at "a poor, dying rate"—dying, but not quite dead. Read what the Spirit says to the seven churches of Asia, in the third chapter of Revelation. They were full

of Christian invalids. Only one of them but what was sadly lacking in Christian healfulness. And that one is only said to have "a little strength," instead of being thoroughly strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It is a sad confession, but a truthful one, that from that day to this the whole Christian Church has been but too much like these seven churches of Asia, too nearly full of spiritual invalids, and dwarfs, and cripples.

Now, what shall be done with them. If they were dead, they should be cast out and buried. But there is still some life in them. They cling yet, with more or less tenacity, to their Christian profession, though they are often stumbling blocks in the way of others, and are never good samples of Christian character, never very bright lights in the world.

Our proposed remedy is the church maul. A flippant and self-confident preacher comes along, and cries—"Purify the church! Nothing can be done, God will not bless you, so long as such unworthy members are in the church!" Then the work of exclusion begins—to end in turmoil and strife, and bitterness, that perhaps will not cease for a generation. The church is split up and weakened, the community is embittered, and men's minds are full of anything but the spirit of revival and of Christ. The fruits of this kind of church-maul purification are not good. The end is worse than before the beginning.

Nor is this the Master's way. Peter denied his Lord at the trial, and all the men and some of the women deserted him at the crucifixion. They all were very weak disciples. They more than richly

deserved the church-maul. And yet, the Master did not use it. On the contrary, he appeared to and fraternized with these same ill-deserving ones for forty days after his resurrection, and then commissioned them as the legatees of his gospel in the world. He "looked" at Peter—that was all; and it was sufficient to the rest to let them look at him, in his triumph over death. Looking and loving was better than a church-maul, and so it is universally. Getting delinquents to contemplate Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith is better than a thousand church trials.

Church trials are sometimes necessary. They cannot always be avoided. Sometimes it is not desirable that they should be. But, fifty years' observation of many church trials teach us that, on the average, they are productive of more evil than good. In almost every case, a little more patience and forbearance would have resulted, either in the offender's reformation, or else he would have become so impatient of warm Christian surroundings, that he would be more desirous of getting out of the church without a trial, than the church would be to turn him out by a trial. Hasty exclusions often result in the loss of souls that otherwise might have been saved.

Brother preacher, if you are going about with a church-maul on your shoulder, throw it away, and throw it as far from you as you can. Don't even scold. The Master didn't. It only makes matters worse. Scolded children never grow better thereby. Breathe out in your preaching the tenderness and compassion of the Master, that made so good an apostle out of the ill-deserving Peter, and you

will win ten where you will not drive one by church-mauling. A sanitarium is better than a house of execution.

Nor does this beligerant and summary process accord with the precepts of the Bible. Paul says, Rom. 14:1, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye." And then, after divers illustrations of weakness in Christians, in the thirteenth verse he sums up the matter, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." He recurs to the matter again, lest any should fail to understand it, in the first verse of the next chapter—"The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak"—in the church as well as out of it. In 1 Thess. 5:14, it is said, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." In Heb. 12:12, 13, "Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but rather that it be healed." Illustrating the church by the body, 1 Cor. 12:22, he says, "Much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary"—that by them, also, the grace and blessing of the gospel may be magnified.

If any one should say it is not certain that such parties were in the church, the answer is that such parties are now in the church, and also were then, as Rev. 3, and other abundant passages prove; and even if Christians were to be so affectioned toward such outside the church, much more should they

be, when they are in the church. Gal. 6:10, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Instead, therefore, of keeping out the weak and undeveloped lambs, they should be taken in and nursed and trained—instead of thrusting out the infirm, they should be cherished and helped—instead of church-mauling the weak, they should be encouraged and strengthened—instead of crippling farther the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, they should be lifted up and helped—instead of despising the weak-minded, they should be borne with and comforted—instead of turning the lame out of the way, they should be helped in the way—instead of casting off the diseased, they should rather be healed—even instead of hasting to exclude the unruly, they should be warned and borne with, to the end that they may be reclaimed and saved; for, James 5:20, "Let him know that he which converteth a sinner, (a transgressor,) from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins"—which is better than church-mauling him over to the devil.

A supplementary, or second object of the church is therefore to be a spiritual Sanitarium, for the strengthening of the weak, the helping of the lame and halting, the healing of the spiritually sick, and the reclaiming of the wandering and unruly; and, to accomplish these purposes, a large amount of forbearance, and kindness, and sympathy, and unwearying love, is necessary. Overlooking, or forgetting this, is at the bottom of much of the success of the devil, and the retarding of the cause of

God. Strong Christians should be in the church for the good of others—weak ones for their own good.

But the great object of the church is the conversion of the world. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Christ began the work. He taught his apostles how to do it. He supplied the supernatural sacrifice—by the grace of God "tasted death for every man," and made it possible that any man can be saved. He supplied the divine power necessary to accomplish the work, and arming his church with it sent it forth to the work of universal conquest. Many men are not saved today, simply because his servants, to whom he entrusted the work and supplied the power, have not gone forth with the precious legacy to the ends of the earth. One has gone to his farm, another to his merchandising, and others to other avocations, while the world is still lying in wickedness.

The duty of the church to do this is admitted on every hand. There is no need of quoting a single proof text to enforce it. And yet, the church is largely disobedient to the divine command. There are tongues enough inside the church to preach the gospel to every creature before this year shall end—in this country, and every other. There is money enough in Christian hands to sustain every on-going tongue while it is doing it. But we clutch the dollars as if they were our own, and in defiance of the Lord's command, proceed to use them for our own selfish purpose. This wealth so used, is cursing us, alluring us away from God, and lost souls will go up to the judgment

to curse us most bitterly as the cause of their ruin—and we perhaps go down to eternal ruin with them.

A great and a sad mistake is generally made, in supposing this obligation to rest principally on the ministry. It does rest on them, but no less on the membership. At the giving of the Great Commission, there were laymen, and women, present, as well as preachers. But there is no distinction. To one and to all it is, "Go ye into all the world," etc. Not that every one should go to some foreign land. But he is to go *somewhere*. It may be to his own neighborhood, or to his own house; or it may be to Africa in Africa, or to Africa, or Germany, or Italy, in America. Somewhere is his place, and woe be to him if he is not in it! He need not take a Saul's armor. He will do better with his own, though it be but a sling with some smooth stones from the brook.

A still more important thing is that what his hand finds to do he shall do with his might. The church is shorn of its power by its apathy. Converting the world to God is the highest and noblest work man can do. But we act as though a thousand things were more important than it. "Yes Lord," we say, "but first there is something of my own that I must attend to." My claims, our actions say, are first, God's only come afterward—generally a good long ways afterwards. The divine power in the gospel is always available. It is always ready at hand. The world does not feel it, because we do not apply it. We have laid it away somewhere; we have almost forgotten that it is at our command. We are too interested and too busy

about something else. "Woe unto them that at ease in Zion."

The earnestness, the persistence, the pluck, with which the church is to strive for the world's conversion, is represented by the Grecian games, 1 Cor. 9:24-27, and Heb. 12:1. For these, as in modern college athletics, a long and severe course of training was necessary, requiring the severest self-denial and the most vigorous effort, and, in the running of the combat, as in the modern rowing, there had to be the closest attention to the business in hand, to the entire exclusion of everything else. Hence, the apostle says, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection," and "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience, (entire devotion,) the race that is set before us," etc,

This, then, is the earnestness, the determination, and the entire devotion, with which Christians should give themselves to the work of the Lord. It includes self-denial and the giving one's self entirely up to its demands. It includes, also, the laying aside of the weights and easily-besetting sins, and also a complete devotion to the Master's service. And, surely, if men will so run, and strive, and row, for earthly victory, we should still more earnestly do it to obtain a heavenly and incomputible crown—especially, since, while only one wins in these earthly games, all may win in the heavenly.

The church, also, in this work of converting the world is represented as an army. Christ is the Great Captain of our salvation, Heb. 2:10, and we are his soldiers, and should be "good soildiers," 2

Tim. 2:3, and "endure hardness" as such. A good soldier has given up his own business and enlisted to give his whole time and energies to the service of another. He has given up his own will to obey completely the will of another—in the Christian's case, not because he has to, but because he has come so completely into harmony with his Great Commander, that he freely and joyfully chooses to do so.

But an army requires organization. Otherwise, it is only an armed mob, quite as dangerous to itself as the enemy. It is organised into companies. and regiments, and brigades, and corps, and divisions, all under one central head. The church has often lacked in organization. We "join the church," and sometimes attend the preaching and the prayer-meeting, and pay the preacher a pittance, and that is all. Many will say, with surprise, "What more is needed?" Almost everything. Where is the thought and prayer, and drill, and preparation, for an onset on the works of the devil? Where is the concerted and simultaneous assaults on the fortresses of the enemy? Sometimes there is something a little like it in the time of a revival. But very soon everything is disbanded, and, if fighting at all, every one is fighting on his own hook, with poor results.

The Sunday School is doing what the church ought to have done, but didn't. The church has finally wisely taken it to itself, as a part of its organization. The missionary society came in the same way, and some churches are incorporating it into their work and some are not. All should do it. It is a part of the onset the church should

make on the world. The same is true of the Young Mens' Christian Association. It is the organization of the older young men of the church for effective service; and, with some exceptions, it has done it well. So, also, of the Endeavor societies.

All these are organizations that should have been in the church, and inaugurated by it. The faster and more completely the church shall absorb them into herself, and adopt their effective organization, the better—until every member, and all his energies and opportunities, are completely and systematically employed in the Great Captain's service. There should be no place, nor opportunities, in the church for drones. Everybody should bet set at some well-defined and effective work, and kept continually at it.

VIII—ITS GOVERNMENT.

I.—THE PRESBYTERY.

It is too evident to be denied, that the apostles, elders and bishops exercised more or less official authority among the churches. James and "the elders" had prominence in the first council, at Jerusalem. When deacons were to be elected, it was by the direction of "the twelve." Paul "set in order" things among the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 11:34, and he left Titus in Crete, Titus 1:5, to "set in order" things that were "wanting" there. In 1 Cor. 7:17, he says of certain important things, "So ordain I in all the churches." Again, in 2 Cor. 11:28, he says—"Besides those things that are

without, that which cometh on me daily, the care of all the churches."

Some of these prerogatives belong to the pastoral office, which is elected by the church, and so is in fact a prerogative of the church, delegated to the pastor. But that is hardly true of all of them. There is an air about them as of especial personal prerogative, pertaining to the ministry itself. It is something more than an apostolical prerogative, ceasing with the apostles, becaused exercised by Titus also, who was not an apostle. It seems to be authority growing out, both of official position, and also of the better knowledge of the gospel and the greater development of Christian power, which properly belongs to a "thoroughly furnished" ministry. It was in fact the guardianship of the doctrines, usages, and purity of the church.

The ordination, too, of ministers and deacons was the assumed and acknowledged prerogative of the apostles and elders, or bishops. When the first deacons were selected, Acts 6:6, they were inducted into their office by the prayer and imposition of the hands of the presbytery. When Barnabas and Paul were ordained, Acts 13:3, it was also in the same manner. In writing to Timothy, 1 Tim. 5:22, recognizing this prerogative as belonging to ministerial hands, he says—"Lay hands suddenly on no man." And so, in all the history of the church, there have been none to question this power of ordination as belonging exclusively to the ministry, or presbytery.

But, if this power of inducting into the ministry or diaconate belongs of right to the presbytery, so must also the power of trying and deposing from

the ministry those who prove themselves unworthy. The one right and power follows necessarily from the other. Hence, while the presbytery cannot exclude a man, even though he be a minister, from the church, it can depose him from the ministry, by the same power with which it inducted him into it. This right, also, is universally admitted—though the Baptists and the Congregationalists sometimes call laymen to act with the ministry, in their councils. But none of them recognize the right of a church either to ordain or depose a minister by itself. There must be a presbytery, composed wholly or mostly of ministers, to act in the case.

Hence it is that there is no such thing with any of the denominations as absolute Congregationalism, nor any such a thing as the absolute independence of the church. The presbytery has a power that the church cannot override. At the same time, the presbytery is not absolutely independent of the church. In any but very exceptional cases, it should not ordain a man except at the request of some church; and, generally, it need not proceed to try a minister, for either misconduct or heresy, until its attention is called to his case by a church. Sometimes, however, the church to which he belongs may be involved in his fautt, and be disposed to sustain him, or be negligent—in which cases, the church should be called to account by the Association, and the minister by the presbytery.

In accordance with these principles, the apostles did not proceed to ordain a successor to Judas, Acts 1:16-26, until the brethren, or church, one

hundred and twenty in number, had elected Matthias by their "lots," or ballots. Then, in the ordination of deacons, Acts, 6:1-6, "the twelve" did not ordain the seven deacons, until the "whole multitude" of the brethren "chose" them for that purpose. So, also, in the ordination of Barnabas and Saul, (Paul,) Acts 13:1-3, they were not ordained, until "the chuch," under the direction of the Holy Ghost, had fasted and prayed, and had made a selection of them.

Hence, the ministry, or presbytery, has the power of self-perpetuation and self-protection, and of setting in order the doctrines and usages, and of guarding the purity of the church. In all ordinary cases, this is to be exercised in conjunction with the church. But in extraordinary cases, such as the organization of a new church where there is no adjacent church with which to counsel, or the ordination of a minister in a similar case, or where the church is negligent of the heresy or unworthiness of a minister, or is involved in his guilt, then the presbytery may proceed at the instance of another church, or on its own motion, and its concluclusions bear the same force as in ordinary cases. The primary power is with the presbytery, and only a secondary with the church. The acts performed are ministerial, such as the ministry alone can perform, but which the church cannot.

In very extraordinary cases, a single minister may organize a church, or ordain a minister. But, it is not generally a wise, and is frequently a dangerous thing to do. If the presbytery is available, by all means get it. If not that, then get one or two other ministers, constituting a *quasi* presbytery,

or the counsel of a church. In primitive times, there must have been cases of this kind. But it is noteworthy and significant that none such are recorded in the New Testament. Wherever they exist, if they do properly exist, it is only in consequence of that necessity that knows no law, and should be yielded to only because they cannot be avoided.

II.—PARITY OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

Aside from the official functions of a pastor, or a minister acting temporarily as a pastor, a minister has no more rights in the church to which he belongs than any other member. Questions are put to the whole church; and decided by the equal vote of all.

In the first church action of which we have any specific ascount, Acts 1:15-26, the body of the disciples, one hundred and twenty in number, was composed of both apostles and laymen, undoubtedly including women, are addressed by Peter as simply "disciples," standing for that purpose on common ground, and are all alike called upon to cast their lots, (ballots,) for a successor to Judas, and they do so, without the least intimation of any distinction, giving any one more power or authority than another.

In the selection of the seven deacons, Acts 6:1-6, the apostles called "the multitude of the disciples," and committed unto them, without any distintion among them, the business of selecting the candidates. It is a clear case of a popular election by the whole multitude of the disciples. So far from the twelve apostles exercising any special authority in the premises, the inference rather is that they

stood aloof even from voting, as they said, "Look *ye* out from among you," etc.

As to the ordination of Paul and Barnabas, Acts 13:1-3, "The church," ..... "as they fasted and prayed," was addressed by the Holy Ghost,—"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," which the church proceeded to do. Here are two notable things operating in conjunction; First, the Holy Ghost had called these men; and, Second, had made the call so evident to the presbytery and church that they proceeded at once to "separate" or ordain them to the work.

So, when there arose a discussion at Antioch, Acts 15:1-35, concerning circumcision, Paul and Barnabas, and certain others, were sent to Jerusalem for a settlement of the matter. When they arrived there, they were received of "the church and of the apostles and elders," and the question was considered, and the apostle James made an admirable address upon the occasion, whereupon "It pleased the apostles and elders, with *the whole church*"—all having an equal voice in the matter—to come to a unanimous conclusion concerning it.

I Matthew 18:15-17, we are told first to try personal effort to reclaim an erring brother, and, if that prove unsuccessful, to tell it—not to the apostles, nor the elders, nor the session, nor any smaller body, but to "the church," and obviously to the whole church, without any distinction among its membership. One therefore had just as much right and authority in the premises as another, in considering and deciding such cases.

In later times, Episcopacy and Presbyterianism crept into the church. But, in the apostolic times,

all such questions as belonged to the church to settle at all, were settled by the "whole church," even "apostles and elders" voting only as all other members, and the humblest having the same vote as they. Even in cases of gross departures from the faith, as in the cases of most of the seven churches of Asia, the apostles, instead of setting them right by any episcopal or presbyterial power in themselves, simply tell them of their wrong, and call upon themselves to purge themselves of it.

These examples are abundantly sufficient to show that in all proper church action in apostolic times every member had the same right as any other member.

III.—INDEPENDENCE IN THE CHURCH.

The church is not independent of Christ and his word. It is absolutely subject to them. It is not independent of truth and human welfare. It is bound to regard the interests of both. We have seen that it is not absolutely independent of the presbytery. It cannot provide its own ministry or diaconate, without the intervention of the presbytery. It cannot do its proper work without the assistance and leadership of the ministry.

But, in a common and popular sense of the word. the church is independent. There is no human power that can properly interfere with it, while it keeps within its own province. The civil law may not dictate to it, so long as it does not violate the interests of society; and, if it does that, it violates its own law. There is no other church, nor association of churches, that can dictate to it, and compel it to reverse its own decisions, even though

they be wrong, nor compel it to do what it does not wish to do. In all these directions, it is independent, and a law unto itself.

Influences soon sprang up in the church, that tended to restrict this independence, and that have grown into several forms of central church government. But they were inoperative and unknown in the primitive church—at least in the form in which they have been developed. There were bishops, (*episcopoi,*) but they were not modern dioceasan bishops. There were elders, (*prȩsbuteroi,*) but they were not members of a modern Presbyterian presbytery. These things have been developed since, restricting the proper independence of the church, but were not parts of the primitive simplicity of the gospel.

IV.—REPRESENTATIVE POWER.

It is generally conceded that one may authorize another to do for him whatever he may properly do for himself. It is on this principle that substitutes and proxies are appointed, and that various bodies appoint delegates or messengers to represent them in various other bodies. So we send representatives to the legislature and to congress, to represent us there, and make laws for us; and the laws they make are regared as binding, because all the people are regarded as present, by their representatives, making laws for themselves.

The same thing is observed in religious circles. A church cannot all be present at some distant gathering, and so it selects a part of its number to act for the whole in that gathering, and the acts of the part are accepted as the doings of the whole,

and as binding upon the whole. Ten or twenty churches are too large, or too widely separated, for all to be present in an association, and so a few brethren are sent to represent and act for the whole. The case is not different where certain brethren are sent to act for the church in a council, for the organization or recognition of a church, the ordination of a minister, or the adjustment of a difficulty. A part act for the whole, and the doings of the part are binding on the whole—are in fact the doings of the whole, because authorized to act for the whole.

This principle was recognized at the first Christian council at Jerusalem. The Antioch church sent Paul and Barnabas, and certain others, to represent it before the church at Jerusalem, concerning a vexing question that had arisen among them. In turn, the Jerusalem church sent Judas and Silas as its representatives to convey to Antioch the sentiment of the Jerusalem church on the subject. It is noticeable, in passing, that this Jerusalem council spoke with an air of authority—"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no heavier burden," etc. That council obviously expected its decision to be acquiesced in; and, though it was squarely against the views of one of the parties to the contention, it was acquiesced in, even with rejoicing. For when the "multitude" of the church were gathered together, and the decision of the council read, they (the church) "rejoiced for the consolation." There evidently were not many kickers in that church.

This council is an important case, in settling the principle of representative power. There were

present at it the apostles and elders and all the leading men of the Jewish church at Jerusalem, in connection with Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of the gentile church at Antioch. And, while there was "much disputing" as to other things, there was entire unanimity as to the right of the church at Antioch and the church at Jerusalem to appoint a certain few men to represent them, and to act for them. As there is nothing contrary to this in any part of the New Testament, it may safely be taken for granted that this was the accepted doctrine of the primitive church.

Churches may therefore send representatives to act for them, and in their name, in a council. If they may do that, they may equally send representatives to act for them in an association or conference; and, the acts of the association or the conference are not the acts of some foreign body, but the acts of the churches themselves, by their representatives. Two or more churches acting together in an association are not at all different in principle from two or more churches acting together in a council. It therefore further follows that sending delegates to act for it and in its name does not infringe in any degree upon the independence of the churches. The action of the delegates is the action of the churches. If the representatives have misrepresented them, it is only a case of misplaced confidence, to be corrected next time. If the action of the associated body is persistently obnoxious, it is their privilege to withdraw and remain away.

But, if churches may rightfully associate together in an association, then several associations may as rightfully associate together in an association,

for the purpose of a wider acquaintance and a closer fellowship, and also for the purpose of engaging in those various larger Christian enterprises that cannot be carried on by a single church alone. But a still wider acquaintance and fellowship are desirable, while there are still larger enterprises for the glory of God and the salvation of men than cannot be carried on by one association, and can be carried on by a general association. Hence, the propriety and advisability of such a general organization.

And this organization, without taking from the individual churches a single right or power they had, to do or not to do, adds immensely to their opportunities and power, Two together can lift a weight that no number of men acting separately can possibly move. One hundred men in a company can defend a point or carry an attack that no number of men fighting separately can ever do. Ten companies in a regiment have not only ten times the force of a single company, but they will triumph over a foe before whom any number of detached companies have to flee in consternation and dismay. A dozen regiments, acting together and simultaneously, have not only twelve times the power of a single one, but have a power, defensive or offensive, that can never be wielded by the same number of men acting individually.

So, the combining of men into churches gives them, not only an added, but a multiplied power. The combining of churches into associations, not only adds to the power of the single churches, but multiplies their power, so that together they can accomplish what would have been altogether beyond their power, if acting only separately. And,

on beyond this, there is a multiplied, as well as an added power, in combining associations into a general association—proving the adage that "In union there is strength."

Our Missionary Baptist friends have realized this in their associations, which have multiplied their power over that of the same number of churches acting separately. But, strangely enough, they have stopped at that, and fail of the strength there is in farther union. And they have become conscious of this, and have partially remedied it. But, instead of doing it in a direct way, by carrying out the principle they started on, in combining churches into associations, they stop at the single association, and proceed to the expedients of missionary, sabbath school, educational societies, and the like, and combine them into "conventions" and "unions," to accomplish the larger works they perceive it proper and necessary to do. They would find a general association, both more straightforward and efficient, but also more manageable, and more completely amenable to the churches.

Our people have wisely chosen the better way.

But, such organizations obviously have no right to trench on the independence or power of the churches. The churches are their masters, not their servants. They have no power at all, save only what the churches have given them—or, better, what the churches themselves exercise through them. They are agencies, through which the churches are cultivating God's vineyard.

V.—CHURCH TRIALS.

The most approved church trials are those that

never occur—through the force of prevention. It is easier to prevent three than it is to end and remedy one. The old English prayer book ought to have had an additional petition—"And, from church trials, Good Lord, deliver us!" The devil has few more potent agencies than a hotly contested church trial. It will do more to alienate friends and embitter a community than almost anything we know of.

Much depends on the pastor. If he is excitable and talkative, things are in danger of growing like a rolling snowball on a moist day in winter. If he is close-mouthed and discreet, and withal has a large measure of grace, they are likely to stop rolling and melt rapidly away. Deacons also have a large influence in the matter. If they gossip, others will gossip, and excitement will increase. If they are wise as serpents and harmless as doves—if they allay strife, instead of promoting it—church trials will not be numerous. Especially, if pastor, deacons and membership unite, in kindness, forbearance and love, as messengers of peace, peace will be quite likely to prevail.

And then, if every one who is trespassed against, would heed the Master's direction, in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, most church trials would be avoided. Let us emphasize the passage by quoting it, "Morover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear

them, tell it to the church." The trouble is that so few heed this simple but effective method. Many so trespassed against commit a greater offense than that of the original trespasser, by neglecting the first steps and bringing it at once before the church, or, worse still, by gossiping the matter all around, before telling it to the church or to the offender. Such persons ought themselves to be called to account, as gross offenders against Christ and the church.

It is generally conceded that offences which have become matters of public notoriety may be brought directly before the church. But, in most of even such cases—perhaps in all—previous private effort would be profitable. If done in a right spirit, it can do no harm. In many cases, it would result in such explanation or confession as would obviate any formal trial, and settle the matter more satisfactorily than any church trial would be likely to do.

In respect to such private efforts, the general rule is that the sooner they are attended to, the better. Waiting gives time for little things to grow into larger ones. Promptness nips many a growing difficulty in the bud. But, in respect to things that have already grown into a trial, it is not best to be hasty. Wait for passions to cool a little, and for the facts in the case to be developed. It is a good thing to be very sure you are right before you go ahead, and the right is not always seen at the first look—generally is not. "He that is first in his own cause seemeth right, but his neighbor cometh and proveth him"—very often proveth him to be mistaken.

But still, "it must be"—that is, it *is*—that, like "offences," church trials more or less frequently come. How shall they be managed?

1. There is no condition a church can be in where it needs more wisdom and grace, more of the mind and spirit of the Master, than in any church trial. Often, the church itself is practically on trial, as to whether it has Christliness enough rightly to handle such a matter, quite as really as is the defendent in the case, and frequently a just verdict would be—"Not competent to try the case." There ought to be a day of fasting and prayer and humiliation, in any church, before entering an important trial—that its result may be such that the Judgment will not reverse its verdict.

2. Civil courts require that a defendant shall always be regarded as innocent until he is proved guilty. As much, certainly, should be accorded the accused before an ecclesiastical court. He is not to be looked at over the shoulder, and made to feel that his brethren are his enemies, but rather his friends. They are not to hide, or whitewash, his faults, when proved, but they are to withhold their verdict until the evidence is all in. The jury is not to make up a verdict until the testimony is all heard and considered.

3. The accused is entitled to be served with written charges, and allowed sufficient time before the trial to prepare himself for it. If wise, he will not ask too much time, because delay is a trick of guilty parties, and an innocent person does not want to become suspected of such motives. Nor is it wise for a church to hurry matters, lest it fall under the suspician of prejudice and unfairness.

Neither party can afford to quibble or contend much over such points. Let there be manifest candor and fair dealing on both sides. The importance of specific, written charges, stating definitely all the accusations, must not be overlooked. To attempt to bring in proof on a point that has not been specifically charged is a great injustice, which a church should never allow.

4. If the accused ask it, he should not be denied counsel. Nor should he be restricted in his choice of counsel, unless in some such extreme case as would cause a civil court to refuse to allow a given lawyer to plead before it. If the accused selects unwisely, that is his own look-out. At the same time, a church is more than justified in demanding entirely decorous conduct from any counsel.

Sometimes the case may involve such points of civil law as may render it altogether proper that both parties provide themselves with legal counsel. Yet each party must judge for itself as to when a lawyer will best answer its purpose. Generally, it is not best for either party to select counsel from outside the denomination. Outsiders do not so well understand the laws and usages involved, and so are liable unwittingly to prejudice their client's cause. Then there is alwas more or less suspicion of an outside counsel—that somehow some unfair advantage is sought thereby.

5. Large liberty as to witnesses should be allowed to both parties. Anything should be allowed that will throw just light upon the issue involved. Some churches—we do not know any among us—refuse the testimony of any one not a church

member. This is perhaps done from a misapprehension of the injunction not to go to law before unbelievers. This has reference solely to the court, not at all to evidence. We are told not to bring cases against our brethren before a worldly court. We should settle such cases among ourselves. But this decides nothing as to evidence from worldly persons. We are after the truth, and should take it from any source that can furnish it to us.

To do otherwise, would frequently result in clearing the guilty, and sometimes in condemning the innocent. Suppose a minister is charged with drinking and gambling in a saloon, where worthy church members never go. Of course, you cannot convict him, be he ever so guilty, unless you take the evidence of those who are there, in the saloon with him, and who are not church members. Suppose one is wrongfully charged with some unchristian act, when and where no church members are present, except the accuser. The witnesses may be persons of truth and veracity, whose word would be good anywhere else, and they all testify in favor of the accused. You could not believe him guilty. Yet the church would have to adjudge him so, if the evidence of the non-church-members is not received.

The true course is to receive all offered evidence, bearing on the case, then carefully sift it and see what it is worth, and give it credit accordingly—just as our civil courts do.

6. It is a question whether church trials shall be public or private. If they are public, parties hearing only a part of the evidence are very apt to misunderstand the value of the whole, and so gross-

ly misconstrue the case. Moreover, popular prejudice is liable to bear unduly in favor of one side or the other. Popular prejudice is often so strong—sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other—that it is almost impossible to get a just verdict in a public trial. A crafty and unscrupulous defendant may bring with him a band of such partisans as will virtually overbear the church and secure an unrighteous verdict.

On the other hand, if the trial is private, somebody is likely to raise the cry of, "star chamber," "deeds of darkness," that are "afraid to come to the light," "persecution," and the like. It may be suggested, in such cases, that it is not altogether creditable to such a party virtually to admit that he has belonged to such a "star chamber," and connived at such "deeds of darkness," without protest or complaint, until his own deeds were questioned. The circumstances not only destroy the force of the charge, but suggest that the party is lacking in evidence on the real charge at issue, and is trying to divert attention from it by a subterfuge.

It is significant, too, that those peoples that manage their church trials most quietly and privately, not only themselves get along best with them, but that condemned or excommunicated parties suffer decidedly less in the end. The fact of condemnation or separation generally becomes known. But, as no great stir is made about it by the parties most concerned, no great stir is made about it by others who are less concerned. Men are sometimes greatly wronged in such matters. But it is no credit to any one that he has got into sore trouble with those with whom he has been as-

sociating. The public almost invariably will award him at least a part of the blame; and, generally, the more he accuses the other party, the more he will be accused and discredited himself. The shrewdest way is for him to say—"We didn't agree; so we separated; that is all there is of it."

Of course, there are some instances where public publishment is necessary. But they are few.

7. The cases in which a church trial strengthens the church or Christianity are far betwen. Where there is a righteous acquittal, the evil is not so greivous. But, even there, it is rare that either party comes out entirely unharmed. It is hardly possible for any one to go through such a battle without being hit—in most cases, hit seriously—and without any party to pension him for it in after years.

Two important considerations follow from this matter. The first is for all concerned to exhaust every other resource before going into a church trial. Let it come to that, only when you have to. Be sure, first, that you have been, and are, all that the Master would have you be, so that in it you will act as *he* would, were he in your place—as you certainly ought to feel yourself to be in his. Be sure, second, that you have exhausted every available Christian means to avoid it—to right every wrong, if you have been wrong—to reclaim and save from the wrong any others who may have been wrong. By other means, you may save some, by church trials very few.

8. We repeat, and it is worth repeating, that forbearance, and Christian love, faithfully applied, have great power to avoid the necessity of church

trials. Surround the offender with an atmosphere of deep spirituality and fervent Christian zeal, make his environment as near as possible what the Christian's will be in heaven, and he will not remain an offender long in the church. He will soon either return to his former love, when you will not wish to turn him out, or the fire of love will be too hot for him, and he be more anxious to get out than you will be to turn him out. In either case, a church trial will be unnecessary.

IX—THE CHURCH IN ACTION.

I.—STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION.

Ever since the time of Augustine, a doctrine has been preached in the church, which, if true, and carried out to its logical conclusions, renders all voluntary effort on the part of Christians to convert the world, both unnecessary and abortive. If God has unconditionally fore-ordained, or predestinated, whatsoever comes to pass, and has so predetermined the number of the saved, and of the lost, that it can neither be lessened nor increased,* and then supplies the "efficacious" means for their salvation or damnation,† then, clearly, the church has nothing whatever to do in the conversion of the world. If it does to its utmost, not an additional one will be saved. If it does nothing, not an additional one will be lost. In such a case, there is no need of action in the church. It can do nothing "efficacious," however much it may try, to over-

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* Westminster and Philadelphia Confessions, Chap. 3.

† Westminster and Philadelphia Confessions, Chap. 10.

throw the works of satan, or to gain victories for the cross. All such efforts will not only be futile, but they will be in opposition to God's "efficacious" doctrines of grace.

But, on the other hand, if this Augustinian-Calvinian doctrine of fatality is not true, and men are free and responsible agents, if the Great Salvation is free, so that "whosoever will" may have it, and whosoever will not will be lost—Christ tasting death for every man, Heb. 2:9—and if, in addition, it devolves on the church to make this proffered salvation known to the world, and to persuade men to repent, then the most tremendous responsibility rests on the church—a responsibility that can be met only by the most determined and the most persistent action.

The difference between these two doctrines is logically as great as can be. If either is true, the other is necessarily false. Both cannot be true, for they are fundamentally contradictory, and each one mutually destructive of the other. But, in their application to human conduct and character, they are wider apart than in their logic. One makes us moral machines, acting only as we are acted upon, and in no sense responsible for our or others conduct or character. The other makes it possible for us to grasp either the good or the bad, and so in an important sense to be the arbiters of both our own and others destiny. The one degrades us below the brutes, for they obviously can come at call or flee from danger. The other exalts us to be only a little lower than the angels, with power to choose and follow either the good or the bad—to make our way to heaven or to hell,

and to help or hinder others in going either road.

It is true that a large portion of those who call themselves Calvinists shrink from the logical and necessary consequences of their doctrine. Even the Wesminister and Philadelphia confessions insist that their predestination of "whatsoever comes to pass" does not "offer violence to the will of the creature."* But that is a mere juggling with words. It might as well be said that white is black and black is white—that a thing is both true and false at the same time. If God has absolutely foreordained or predestinated "whatsoever comes to pass," then, clearly, there is no possible chance for "the will of the creature" to bring anything to pass, or to prevent anything from coming to pass. If the will of the creature has brought, or can bring, anything whatever to pass, then God has not predestinated "whatsoever comes to pass."

A much larger class refuse to adopt, or defend, the harsh statements of these catechisms, and yet insist that somehow the election of the saints and the reprobation of sinners are true, and yet we are free moral agents. But this only changes the language, without escaping the dilemma. If men are elected to heaven, they must go there, and nowhere else. If men are reprobated to hell, it is not possible for them to go anywhere else. In either case, they are not free, and cannot be, and men only stultify their own intelligence, by affirming that men are free and yet that somehow they are not free. There is no middle ground. If either doctrine is true, the other is certainly false. They can by no possibility both be true—and no man can be called

* Chapter 3, Section 1.

upon to believe both, or justified in pretending that he does. He abdicates his own reason when he attempts it. They are diametrically and fundamentally different doctrines.

It is still farther true that most Calvinists act as though men are free to seek salvation, and salvation free to be sought. They call upon men to repent, just as though they can repent—to believe, just as though they can believe—to obey, just as though they can obey. They preach that dire punishments will be visited upon them if they do not repent, and believe, and obey. In fact, they preach and act toward men just as Arminians do.

And we are very glad they do, as thereby many are saved. But, at the same time, they do it only through the very greatest inconsistency. Out of one side of their mouths, they preach that men can repent, and believe, and obey, but out of the other they preach that they cannot. Their preachments do not hold together. They deny in one minute what they insist on in the next. These good people are really better than their theories, because the free will, free salvation part of their preaching leads some people to be saved. Their practical belief in missions, and Sunday schools, and education, and progress generally, is benficial both to themselves and the world, even though were they consistently to carry out their theories they would not engage in anything of the kind. Practice is worth more than theory, and an unpracticed theory will die out after a while.

But, because men can be inconsistent, because it is possible for them to preach things that cannot be made to agree together, it does not follow that in-

consistent things are consistent, nor that men can be free and fated at the same time. The fundamental antagonism of these two systems of belief remain, and must ever remain, and the question presses on us—"Which one shall we adopt?"

In our discussion, we have all along assumed human freedom and responsibility, as opposed to foreordination and fatalism, to be the true doctrine. Let us see something more about it.

II.—HUMAN FREEDOM—THE ARGUMENT.

1.—An Explanation.

At the outset, we are sometimes met with the declaration that this doctrine of free will and free salvation makes men save themselves. We have no doubt that the good people who make this statement believe it. They have become so befuddled with Calvinistic fallacies, that it actually seems to them that if one is free to accept or reject salvation, he thereby saves himself. But, it is not true.

He who is fallen into a pit, from which he cannot extricate himself, can still lay hold of a rope let down from above, by which he can be pulled out. He cannot pull himself out. The more he should try, the more likely he would still be to remain there. But, if he lays hold of the rope, and clings to it, the party above can pull him out. And yet, he would never get out, if he did not lay hold on the rope and cling to it. The sinner has likewise power to lay hold of God's offered salvation; and, if he does so, God will save him. He no more saves himself than does the man in the pit. God saves him. He is saved by grace—God's redeem-

ing favor. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that (salvation) not of yourselves; it is the gift of God"—though the faith through which it comes is not the gift of God, but the act of the creature. The medium is human, the salvation flowing through it is divine. The charge, therefore, that we believe in saving ourselves is utterly untrue, and can innocently be made only by one grossly ignorant of our doctrine.

And this suggests that, while we believe man can do some things, and many things, he cannot do all things. There are limitations. He cannot save himself. He can choose the wrong way, but he cannot escape the consequences if he walks in it. In fact, there are many more things he cannot do than there are that he can. But he can do what God asks him to do, and refrain from doing what God asks him not to do.

2.—Human Cansciousness.

It is clear that all men think themselves to be free and responsible. They apologise for their wrongs, because conscious that they might have done otherwise. They repent of evil deeds, because they feel that they need not have committed them. They address themselves to good works, because they feel it to be within their power to do them. Concerning all their actions, they feel justification or condemnation, because they feel that they might have done otherwise than they did. Of the existence of these feelings—this consciousness—there can be no question. All men feel so, even those who believe the doctrine of fatalism.

Now, if the doctrine of freedom and responsibil-

ity is not true, and that of predestination is true, then these feelings are utterly ungrounded and deceptive. They plague us with convictions of wrong done, when in fact no wrong was actually done, and when we actually had no power to do wrong. They excite and disturb us with feelings of responsibility, when in fact we have no responsibility, and can have none. They constantly urge us to do or not to do, when the matter is all settled outside of ourselves, and we have no power at all in the premises. They make us feel that we are free agents, when in fact everything is bound in the fetters of foreordination.

If these things are so, then two other things are obvious. The first is that man is most wretchedly made up—to feel a sense of responsibility when he has no responsibility, to feel a sense of guilt when he is not at all guilty, to feel that he is free when in fact he is bound fast in the chains of predestination. If our creator has made us that way, his cruelty is beyond description. The second is that if we cannot trust our consciousness concerning our ability to do or not to do, concerning what can we trust it? If that is not reliable, what is there concerning our inward experiences that is reliable? What can we trust? Must we all the time, and concerning all things, feel that the seeming is only the seeming, and is not real?—that life is all a deception and a sham, and a snare?

3.—Our Judgments of Others.

Another consideration bearing on the subject is that we all regard and treat others as free and responsible. We blame them for doing wrong and

praise them for doing well. We hang a man for murder, and shut him up in the penitentiary for theft. If everything "whatsoever comes to pass"* is foreordained or predestinated, we have no business to do anything of the kind. They could not help doing as they did, and they could not do any otherwise. They therefore are neither to be blamed nor praised, much less punished, for anything they do. We are guilty of doing the murderer the greatest injustice by hanging him, and the thief by putting him in the state's prison. A man is not to blame for ravishing his neighbor's wife—he was predestinated to do it, by a superior power. How could he help doing it? How can any man help doing what he does? It is a shame and a monster injustice to punish a man for not doing what he could not do. As well thrash a boy for not going out of doors when you have tied him up fast to the bed post within. If, therefore, foreordination and predestination are true, our treatment of others is all wrong—radically wrong, outrageously wrong.

4.—The Basis of Civil Government.

Civil government is obviously based upon the assumption of human freedom. Men are hung on the gallows, or shut up in prison, because we believe they committed their crimes in the exercise of a freedom and power, by which they might have abstained from their criminal acts. If the culprit's attorney can prove that the act was done under duress, he escapes free, and the guilt is attributed to the party putting him under duress. If, while the

* Westminister and Philadelphia Confessions, Chap. 3.

physical ability remains, we find the will is disabled by idiocy or insanity, the law shuts him up in an institution for the feeble-minded, or in an asylum for the insane, but never sends him to the gallows or the prison, because he is perceived to be incapable, and so not guilty. He is an object of commiseration, but not of punishment.

But, if the doctrine of Calvinism, no matter what particular form it takes, is true, if men are under any form of necessity to do or not to do, then no one can justly be sent to the gallows or the penitentiary. He could not help it. It was fated, or foreordained, or predestinated—all involving the same inability to do or not to do. He may be, he is, unfortunate, but he is not guilty. Obviously, the civil law does not believe in fatality of any kind. It believes that all who are subjects of punisment, are so because they possess the freedom and the ability to do the right and to abstain from criminal conduct.

5.—It Misrepresents God.

Then, if God has absolutely "foreordained whatsoever comes to pass," as Calvinism declares, then men, whatever they do, are only doing what God has foreordained that they shall do. They cannot help it. He predestinates them to do it. They are acting under his compulsion. What business then has even he to punish any of them to all eternity—or to punish them at all—for what they could not help doing—what in fact he himself compelled them to do.

Can any one conceive of a more outrageous monster of tyranny than this fatalistic theory makes out

God to be. Let any human father act in such a way towards his children, and there would be white caps or regulators in any community. Such conduct would not be tolerated for a moment in any human being. He would be execrated and driven out from among men everywhere. Can that possibly be a true theory that exhibits God in any such a light?

It misrepresents God farther by making him the author of sin. Put the matter into the form of a syllogism—

1. God foreordains, or predestinates, whatsoever comes to pass;
2. Sin comes to pass;
3. Therefore, God is the author of sin.

On the Calvinistic theory, the lost in hell can say to God:—"We are here because you predestinated us to do what we did. We couldn't help doing it. We are not to blame for it. You are the responsible party. Therefore, you ought to let us out of this torment, and put yourself in our place."

6.—*The Bible Argument.*

1. There can be no question that God invites and commands men to do certain things, and not to do certain other things. The Bible is full of examples of this kind. "Seek ye the Lord," "Come unto me," "Believe the gospel," "Repent ye," "Do all to the glory of God," "Abstain from all appearance of evil," "Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord," Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not bear false witness," "Thou shalt have no other God before me." Such passages could be multiplied indefinitely.

2. There can be no question that the Bible promises blessings for obedience, and threatens punishment for disobedience. "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," "He that believeth not shall be damned," "Come unto me, ... and I will give you rest," "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," "Let him turn unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him," "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." These passages also can be multiplied indefinitely.

3. Now these passages are in entire harmony with free will and free salvation, but entirely out of harmony with a sermon we once heard preached, exhorting, for three mortal hours, a "little flock," that had diminished to two old ladies, to "fear not,"* ending with just this, and only this, to the sinner—"And now, poor sinner, what shall I say to you? I can only say that it *may* be you are one of God's elect, and if you are, he will bring you in, in his own good time." Fancy grand old Isaiah ending up his sermon on seeking the Lord, Isa. 55:6, 7, "Seek ye the the Lord, while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon him!"—Or the Master, sitting on the heights over against Jerusalem, and saying, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I

* What they had to "fear," of his doctrine is true, we did not find out.

have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!"—ending with—"It *may* be you are among God's elect, and, if you are, he will bring you in, in his own good time." O, what a coming down!

The fact is that if these exhortations and commands, on the one hand, and these promises and threatenings, on the other, are true, then Calvinism is false. If they are not true, if men may obey or disobey, then God's dealings with men are the most stupendous sham, and make believe, and delusion, and tyranny, that the human mind can conceive.

Just think of it. Prophet after prophet, and seer after seer, and dispensation after dispensation, and exhortation after exhortation, and command after command, and threatening after threatening, and promise after promise, addressed to men, just as though they had something to do about it, and some responsibility for the final outcome, when, after all, the whole thing was irrevocably fixed, in the language of Calvinism, "from before the foundation of the world." What a wonderful waste of energy, and effort, and sacrifice, and blood, to attain what was so irrevocably fixed that nothing can be added to or taken from it. What a huge Much Ado about Nothing!

But, we are told the means are predestinated as well as the end. The assertion is an assumption without a particle of proof, made to extricate Calvinism from a dilemma. Yet, if true, then we need not bother ourselves about it. There is no need of our having any care about it—no need of calling or warning sinners—no need of missions, or sabbath

schools, or revivals, or preaching, (for God has no more need of preaching than of missions or Sunday schools,)—no need of spending any care, or thought, or time, or money, about any of these things—no more in the case of the saint than of the sinner—if God has predestinated it, *he* will bring it about, "in his own good time," and way. "Let us eat, drink, and be merry." We have nothing to do about matters—unless God compels us, and he will compel us if he wants us to do anything—no, not that, for, according to Calvinism, *we* cannot do anything anyhow. God does it all himself. At best, all we have to do is to do what we are so irresistably moved to do that we cannot help doing—that, in fact, we do not do at all. God holds us under duress, and compels us to do, whether we will or not.

And then, worse yet, we are made to feel that we are doing it, when on this theory we are not doing it, to feel that we are guilty when we are not guilty, that we are responsible when we are not responsible, that we should have done things when we were utterly unable to do them, makes us unhappy for supposed wrongs when in fact we have done no wrong, and makes us feel that we can do things to please God and benefit man when there is no possibility of our doing anything of the kind. This is the unkindest cut of all. If our creator made us so that we could do nothing, why deceive us with a feeling that we can—if we were foreordained to do the wrong, and cannot help it, why torment us with a feeling that we are guilty for it—if we cannot lay hold on God's salvation, why ask us to lay hold on it and make us feel that we can? This

is adding insult to injury, taunting and punishing us for our very weakness and inability, and heaping on us a load of imaginary and impossible woes.

Having proved that within certain limitations men are free to choose and to act—to do what God asks us to do, and to refrain from doing what he asks us not to do, our work would seem to be done. Yet it is possible for men to choose and to seek salvation, and still there be no salvation within his reach. It is possible that man is free and yet that the gospel is not free. The two things are the counterparts of each other, and either practically useless without the other. What benefit in our being free to choose and to seek, if there is no salvation free to be sought. Or, what need of a free salvation, if we have no power to possess ourselves of it.

III.—FREE SALVATION—THE ARGUMENT.

God has required repentence, faith, obedience, as conditions of salvation. These we must do, as well as can do, or God will not save us. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "Whosoever believeth not shall be damned." "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him," 1 John 2:4, and "All liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. 21:7. And yet, while these are absolute conditions, and they must in all cases be complied with, the Salvation that God confers when they are complied with, is a free gift, a Free Salvation. It is Free, first, in that it is given us, "without money and without price," and also in that it is freely bestowed

upon "every one" that believeth. Any one may have it—all might have it.

1.—Salvation a Free Gift.

That was a glorious proclamation of the grand old Prophet, Isa. 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Things that are bought, are bought by paying an equivalent. But man has nothing that is an equivalent for his soul's salvation. Therefore it must be given him, "without price," or he cannot have it at all. And so God says by the Revelator, Rev. 22:17, "Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely." As we have seen, he has power to do, or not to do, and so also power to "come and take" the "freely" offered divine gift of the "water of life." But he takes it as a free gift, not as a right.

And so Paul also says, Rom. 3:23, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Again, Eph. 5:8, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that (salvation) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The word "grace" itself settles the question. For grace is favor, or a gift, as opposed to that which is bought or earned. In the nature of things, therefore, that which is of grace is bestowed as a favor, and neither bought nor earned. In writing to Timothy, 2 Tim. 1:9, he says:—"Who hath saved us ..... not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, (to save them that believe,) and grace, which (salvation) was given us

in Christ Jesus. It was "given" us, and is therefore a free salvation.

Simon, the sorcerer, thought the gift of God's salvation might be purchased, Acts 8:20. But Peter indignantly repudiated the idea, saying, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." So Rom. 6:23, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ"—or, eternal life is the gift of God. Rom. 9:16, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." This passage itself teaches that men may will, and they may run, but the salvation they receive is not as a reward or compensation, but is of God's mercy—a Free Gift. In view of this, Paul exclaims, 2 Cor. 9:15, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." And so, John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave, (a gift, a free gift,) his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. So, while we repent, and believe, and obey, we also sing—

"Jesus paid it all; all to him I owe!"

2.—Salvation Free for All.

The doctrine that salvation is a gift—a free gift—is not often seriously questioned. Yet all Calvanists deny that it is free for all—that "whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely." Now we have seen that all men have the power of will, and to do or not to do the things God has made the conditions of salvation. All men, to whom a knowledge of salvation has come, may

therefore "will," and so may "come and *take* the water of life," and take it "freely."

Of this it is to be said, as on the previous point, the Bible seems to offer salvation to all men indiscriminately, "whosoever believeth shall be saved." "Who will have, (desires,) all men to be saved." "Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," etc. And so in too many places to quote. On the face of them, at least, they offer a free salvation to men, any man, all men. Now, as before, if that is not what they teach, the Bible is deceptive, and God tantalizes men by seeming to offer them what is not within their reach, and all such offers are a deception, a sham, a mockery, a deceit. God certainly does not deal so with us, or play make-believe with us.

Then, as Paul has it, Gal. 3:22, "The scriptures hath concluded all under sin." All are sinners. All are alike exposed to eternal death. In fact, all out of Christ are dead already. The beginning of that death that never dies has got hold of them. Now God comes and of his infinite mercy provides a remedy for sin. But what an inconsistent and partial God he would be to provide salvation for some of these "miserable sinners," and not provide it equally for all in the same condition. Could you defend the character of such a God as that. It can not be done. It would be to defend a partiality we abhor in human rulers.

Some say—"All are alike exposed to divine wrath; now, if God, of his inscrutable mercy, sees fit to save some, the others are only left where they were; no harm has been done; they have no cause

to complain." But they *have* cause to complain. If two sons are guilty of the same offense, both justly deserving the whip, neither has done anything to atone for or palliate the offense, both stand equal in the eye of justice and of the father—if, now, the father proceeds to whip the one and reward the other, the whipped son *has* just cause to complain, and so have all beholders, that the same mercy was not shown to him as to his equally guilty brother. God's ways to man could not be justified by such a course as that. It exhibits God as a monster of inequality, partiality and injustice. It is scarcely less than the heighth of partiality and injustice so to discriminate where there is no reason apparent for discrimination. God can neither be impartial nor just, unless he treat all alike who are in the same condition. If he provides salvation for some of them, he thereby creates, so to speak, a necessity that he in like manner provide the same for them all—as, in fact, he has done.

God says, Mat. 11:28, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." All labor and are heavy laden with sin. So God asks them all to come to him; and, as we have seen, all may do what God asks them to do. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John 5:40. God does not prevent them coming. No decree or fatality prevents them. But *ye* will not. All that hinders is in themselves, and within their own power.

"But," says one, "no man can come to me, (Jesus,) unless the Father draw him," John 6:44. That is right. But the Father does draw all men, does invite, exhort, and even entreat, all men to

come to him. He compels no man, but he draws all. He says "come *ye*"—not I will make you come. So he says, Ez. 18:32, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." Mind, it is "turn yourselves." Then, chap. 33:11, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die!"

Paul says, 1 Tim. 2:5, of "God our Savior," "Who will have, (or desires,) all men to be sayed." All who are lost, therefore, are not lost by any "will," or decree, or by predestination of God. Peter, also, preached the same doctrine, 2 Pet. 3:9, "The Lord .... is .... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentence." "All" cannot be made to mean an "elect" few, and 'the Lord is *not* willing" cannot be worked over into, "the Lord *is* willing," and more than willing—that he has actually foreordained a large part of them to be lost. How predestination does "wrest" the scriptures.

"But," it is insisted, "if Christ died for some who will not be saved, so far as they are concerned, did he not die in vain?" By no means. He thereby exhibits God's exceeding and impartial love to man, which goes far to justify the ways of God toward man, and this exceeding and impartial love wins some who would otherwise be lost. Then it is no more in vain than the rain and the sunshine, that do not bring forth verdure from every place, and may be shut out from any place.

The Bible is full of invitations to come to God,

as well as of earnest warnings of the consequences of not coming to him. These invitations are general and indiscriminate. They are not to the Jews alone, but to all men, any men, everywhere. "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is unto the sons of man," Prov. 8:4. It is not to some men, but to "men," and so includes all men. It is not to the "elect" of the sons of man, but to "the sons of man," comprehensively and universally. Peter says at the house of Cornelius—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." Peter had believed in an elect people before, the Jews, but he is now converted to believe in a free salvation, for all men. Precisely so it is of all God's calls. If there is any exceptions, if there are any "reprobates" who cannot heed, any "non-elect" whom God does not mean, anybody anywhere who is not included, the language gives no hint of it. It comes to one man just as to any other, and calls him to come. And he may come. There is salvation for any, and for all men who will listen to his voice and heed his call.

IV.—THE INDICTMENT AGAINST CALVINISM.

The indictment, therefore, against Calvinism, in all its forms, is—That it denies the voice of universal human consciousness, which asserts our own freedom — That it denies the instinctive and universal verdict of all men, as to the guilt or innoscence of others—That it is subversive of all civil government—That it grossly misrepresents God, and makes him the author of all sin, and a monster

of injustice and tyrrany—and, That it is contrary, not alone to thousands of the plainest invitations, commands, threatenings and promises of the Bible, but also to the whole tenor, spirit, and object of the Bible, making it and the whole economy of the gospel a sham, a make-believe, a pretense and a delusion.

V.—THE CONCLUSION.

If this is true—and it cannot be successfully denied—then Calvinism cannot be the theory on which the church shall act. Then, all considerations that condemn Calvinism equally assert freedom and responsibility for man, and so rolls responsibility on the church to "preach the gospel to every creature," to put forth every possible effort to persuade men to be reconciled to God, and to grow up to the fullness of the stature of men, in Christ Jesus—the largest possible manhood.

The Church in Action, therefore, is to be an army with banners—a mighty, aggressive, persistent foe of sin and the devil, and equally devoted to building up righteouness and holiness in the earth.

X.—AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH.

The authority given to Peter, Mat. 16:18, 19, has before been referred to. In Mat. 18:18-20 and in 20:23, similar authority is given to the disciples at large, virtually to the church.

Just what that authority was, or how much was included in it, does not fully appear. The Roman Catholics make the first passage a justification for

their Papacy, and the others a justification for their doctrines of the supremacy of the (their) church over even the Bible, of priestly absolution, and their assumed right to change the primitive ordinances. Protestants deny all this, and generally make that authority to consist in the spiritual power of Christianity over the world, manifested through the church.

But there is another point involved. From the first, there has been a gradual development of doctrines and usages, from the primitive church to the church of Rome, from the primitive interchangeable presbuteros and episcopos to the diocesan bishops of episcopacy, from the independent churches to a centralized ecclesiastical govenment, that reverses the source of power and puts it into the central organization instead of the church. Harnack* and others have given a very full history of this development, and show how one thing has grown out of another, and other things have grown from it. There is no question that there has been such development. The question is whether we are to accept the developed doctrines and usages, or are we to cling tenaciously and only to the primitive manifestaltions.

The question is not devoid of difficulty. If we cling only to the first manifestations, we are unable to find the fullest authority for the Christian sabbath, for the doctrine of the Trinity, salvation by faith alone, or the collecting of the churches into stated associations, for none of these things distinctly appear at the day of Pentecost, or for some time thereafter. On the other hand, we find some

* Harnack on Dogma.

things then, such as the communist division of property, the continuance of circumcision and of the Jewish sabbath, and for more than a score of years* after the ascension the adhering to the idea that Christianity was for the Jews alone, unless in exceptional cases, like that at the house of Cornelius—no one of which would we now be willing to adopt.

All Protestants, perhaps, would be willing to accept all developments made before the closing of the scripture canon. But the last book ofthe New Testament was written before A. D. 100. Up to that time, the Jewish church was observing the Jewish sabbath, some of them also the Christian, and the gentile church the Christian sabbath. Practically, at least, it was not a settled question. The character of Christ as a Divine personage was not settled for some time, so that Arius afterward had a large following in preaching that he was not equal to the Father. And then, some after developments had their beginnings earlier, and others of them were manifestly along the same line, and were only fuller manifestations of what had commenced before. How are we to disentangle and separate such things, so as to accept one part of the development and reject the rest.

It is a more difficult question than many suppose. If we take the Catholic doctrine of accepting its fullest developments, including baptismal regeneration, priestly absolution, indulgences to commit future sins, transubstantiation, and immaculate conception, we shall still find our positions

* The council Jerusalem, Acts 15:19-29, was some twenty years after the crucifixion, when it required a general council to extend toleration to a church of uncircumcised gentiles.

hotly contested and difficult to maintain. If we reject everything not developed in the first century, we shall have to give up some things we now accept, and will seem to stand against the world's steady stream of progress. What shall we do?

There are, however, some general and simple principles that will materially help us.

1. The outward, the organic, is an important part of Christianity. But it is not its most important part. It is only the garment it wears, or at best the house in which it lives. Christ's greatest battle was with outward formalism. It confronted him on every hand, in the dead ceremonials of the Jewish church. It was not therefore to be expected that he would furnish another sample of formalism. What he did do was to furnish a Life and let it clothe itself in such forms as best fitted its purposess—just as in nature he implants the life of the lily in the seed committed to the earth, and lets it grow its own leaves and flowers. That life came in fullest manifested measure at the day of Pentecost.

2. Hence, the organic, its outward, was to be developed from the life. There had to be a coming together, the spirit mightily drew them, and the consequent assembling made an *Ekklesia*. The church had to manifest itself in preaching, baptising, ordaining elders and deacons, manifesting fellowship, communing, and the like, and they did it in the way most accordant with the circumstances and the outbreathing of the divine life within them, and this constituted their church government. It was not long before contact with the world brought up questions of principle to be solved. They re-

called the Master's teaching, and applied it to each case in hand, and this constituted their development of doctrine—their creed.

In the case of the apostles, there was not much room for mistake. They were full of the life of the gospel—were inspired—and that inspiration brought all things to their remembrance whatsoever the Master had said unto them, John 14:26, so that they had divine means for the proper settlement of all such questions. Hence, the ground for accepting apostolic precedent as well as divine precept, as a rule of action. What they developed—not in individual cases, but in their aggregated and matured doctrine and usages—may be accepted as a rule of faith and conduct for the church. And so apostolic example is accepted as authority, along with divine precept.

3. But the farther we get away from the apostles, the less the authority and the certainty. There is more mixing with surrounding influences, and correspondingly less certainty as to the development. Some of it doubtless has been right, and is to be cherished. Some of it has undoubtedly been wrong, and is to be repudiated. Some of it—perhaps a larger part—has been a mixture—by no means all the right thing—not all of it wrong. Some of it, possibly, the best under the circumstances—but otherwise, under a different state of things.

Hence, obviously, no such authority attaches itself to the subsequent church as belonged of right to the apostolic—no such authority belongs to the pope as belonged to Peter, (and no such authority belonged to Peter as is now usurped by the pope,) —no such authority belongs to the modern ministry

as belonged to the apostles—no such authority belongs to modern councils, consistories, synods, conferences, or associations, to decide upon doctrines or shape usages, as belongs to the uttered declarations of the Master and his apostles in the sacred scriptures, and to the manifested Life of Jesus, in himself, at Pentecost, and in the apostolic church.

4. But, is there to be no after development? Is the church to stagnate after apostolic times? Is there no promise of progress? While the world progresses in everything else, must it stand still in religion?

By no means. There is quite as much progress in religion as in anything else. But how much is there in nature that is really new? Nothing—absolutely nothing. Stephenson made nothing new in steam, Edison nothing in electricify. All was there from the beginning. God had stored it all up for future use, as the world's needs should require, from the time he ended his creation. The wise man was right when he said—"There is no new thing under the sun." It is all but the drawing forth, as needed, of the old treasures for new needs. So, there is stored up in God's word and Christ's manifested life all the resources needed in the world's subsequent religious development.

It is astonishing what a wealth of resource there is in the Bible. We have long been digging treasures from the buried cities of the past, and seem far from the end of them. We are today looking on the mummied faces of the Pharaoh that exalted Joseph, and of the daughter that rescued Moses from the bulrushes. But there is something more than mummies to be dug out of God's word. There

are livin g treasures there—vital with hitherto unused forms of truth and life. What has given Bunyan's Pilgrim such a world-wide fame is his wondrous bringing-forth of the treasures of human experience, under the development of the gospel—and the mine has not been exhausted. Mrs. Whittall Smith's "Christian's Secret of a Happy Life" is another exploration, in another direction, into the Bible's store-house of light and life.

Another astonishing thing is how slow of perception we are to grasp what there really is in the scriptures—just as it required so many ages for men to find out the power there is in steam and electricity, or the wealth of carbon in the mountains full of coal. Christ explicitly foretold his death. And yet, the disciples did not perceive the significance of his words. Christ distinctly commanded his disciples to preach his gospel in all the world. And yet, it required a generation for them really to perceive that the gospel was to be preached to others than Jews. Christ at least gave his disciples an example of observing the Christian sabbath. And yet, it required almost a century for the Jewish converts to understand what he meant. Christ had been prophesied as the Everlasting Father,* and declared to be God Manifest in the Flesh,† and in many ways his Eternal God-head‡ had been declared in the most positive terms. And yet, Arius preached him as inferior to the Father, and Unitarians believe him to be only a man.

We sometimes say God has not explicitly revealed a form of church government. And yet, when we come to search around for what he has said,

* Isa. 9:6. † 1 Tim. 3:16. ‡ Rom. 1:20.

and what the apostles did, and to comprehend it, we find he has come nearer it than had been supposed. Men talk about the insufficiency of Christianity for the world's needs. And yet, we have not thus far reduced the Golden Rule to actual practice, nor induced men to love and cherish others as themselves. There are men who are practicing these things—only there are not enough of them.

We are laboring over questions of tariff and revenue, and puzzling the brightest brains how to make revenue equal to expenditures. But when Christianity has developed so that men "learn war no more," nine-tenths of the revenue can be abolished, and yet have more than is needed for expenditure. We are building jails and paying sheriffs, but when men do to others as they would be done by, very few of either will be needed. We are wrestling over the questions of intemperance and social iniquity, but when gospel authority prevails, both will disappear. We are having a struggle between capital and labor, but when men come to understand and practice the Bible's law of their relations to one another, they will be found to be fast and co-operative friends.

It is true that the mass of agitating laboring men see nothing in Christianity for them, and would rather tear down the churches than to attend them. It is true that Christianity will never bring about the reign of beer and brawling that constitutes the heaven of so many of our foreign laborers—as well as of some of our home-born. But it is also true that men do not always see what is for their own best interests, or they would not have crucified the best friend humanity has ever had. It is true, gener-

ally, that a large proportion of the people do not yet see how a reign of universal righteousness can be developed from New Testament precepts and apostolic exrmples. But, it does not follow that a thing is not, because some people, or a good many, people do not see it. There have always been eyes that see not.

But most eyes, even, can see how Christianity developed a sentiment and spirit of fraternity, that has made the aforetime almost universal practice of slavery the exception everywhere. Most eyes can see how under the reign of the gospel the barbarous races from the north, that overran the world's previous civilization, have been developed into the best races the world has ever seen. Few eyes now fail to see how liquor drinking, once entrenched even in the pulpit, has been driven into screened saloons, that rest under the ban of public opinion. Readers of history know how Tetzel's Indulgences have been driven so far out of sight, that few of our young people have ever heard of them.

It is true that these and other similar results have been produced without any great ecumenical council, to revamp the doctrines or usages of the church. They could not have been brought about by any new creeds, or any new form of ecclesiastical government. They have come almost without observation. But they have come, notwithstanding, from the great armory of principles and practices stored in the Bible and the practice of the apostolic church. The bitterest foe of Christianity, even though he were to deny that the gospel has produced these things, will still be compelled to admit that all these developments are in the line of its

teachings. It has in fact produced them, and lies at the bottom of the world's progress.

And, if it has done this, unlooked-for before hand by common eyes, the inference is plain and strong that it has resources still in reserve, to bring about the "good time coming," that prophetic eyes have long been looking-for.

But, if all this has been done, not Catholic fashion, by revision of creeds or alterations of ordinances, it will hereafter go on in the same way. The authority of the church is not to change God's ordinances, not to invent new ones, nor abolish old ones, but to develop and bring out what is in the gospel, and has been in it from the beginning, and to apply it to the destruction of the world's woes, and the building up of all its human interests. It does this by first regenenating and rehabilitating the individual man, and then setting him at work in drawing-out and applying its resources for the uplifting of others.

It has been done, as it was at the beginning, by the growth and outwork of the Life of Christianity, taking to itself such weapons and agencies as are best adapted to the demands of the times. These change. The Life does not. Nor does the outward develop along a different line than at first. In Luther's time, the great object was to put faith in its proper, working place. In Wesley's, to make it effective in experience. Not so very long ago, the main effort was to secure the conversion of grown up men and women. We do not neglect that now. But, we are beginning to see how much better it is to gather in the children, before they have given some of their best years to the devil.

When the mass of men were ignorant, it was not some much matter that the minister was deficient in this world's wisdom. But, it would not do to leave the masses ignorant. That is contrary to the Life and teachings of the Bible, and the interests of man. But, now, when boys and girls are in the schools, and Sunday school scholars are familiar with the Bible, ministers must needs be better informed.

In apostolic times, before St. John and other eye and ear witnesses of the Master were dead, the Christian sabbath became established as an institution of the church, and so is to be accepted to the end of time. Circumcision had dropped out entirely under the leadership of apostles, and it also was recognized as one of the "fulfilled" things, no longer to be perpetuated. The commission had also been recognized as sending the church literally and actually to all the world. Beginning with the council at Jerusalem, the representative, or associational, principle had become so established in that early time, that we need have no hesitation in applying it to all forms of church work—and, if delegates are made sufficiently representative, it will meet all the needs of the church.

Paul had emphasized faith enough for the foundation of all Luther's doctrine of faith, and James had put works into sufficient prominence to justify the summoning the church to its supremest effort for Christ and humanity, while Jesus' cry to the sinner to—"Strive, (agonize, Gr. *agonizette*,) to enter in at the strait gate," is enough always to stir to penitence, and "strong crying and tears." Paul's strivings in the eighth chapter of Romans, is seed

enough to produce all the heart-searching of a Kempis, of Madame Guyon, and Wesley's class meetings, and for the most thorough introspections that is possible to converted or unconverted humanity.

If the Bible and the apostles were not inspired, and so there is put into the Life and the Book more than is put, or can be put, into any uninspired book or institution, then it would hardly do to claim for them power to supply all the progressive religious needs of men for all coming time. But he who has put coal into the hills for coming ages, who has stored up electricity in the earth, that even learned men did not discover for centuries, and has undoubtedly other forces in waiting for future development, is just as able to store truth in His Book, and Life in his inspired apostolic church, to meet all our coming religious needs. Whatever we can dig from these mines is genuine. All else is counterfeit—is human, with more or less imperfection in it, often actually opposed to the truth.

Thus we reject the claims of Rome, which only stagnate and bind in the fetters of formalism and ceremonials, as did Judaism. But, preserve its Life, its internal power, and Christianity has resource enough to meet and supply the ages, and to lead the van of progress itself.

BOOK SECOND.

INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

I—THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

I.—PRELIMINARY.

In discussing the Christian Sabbath, there is no actual need of discussing either the Jewish or the ante-Mosaic sabbath. It stands on a foundation of its own. And yet, some preliminary observations concerning them may not be out of place.

Able men, and good men, have questioned whether a sabbath was instituted at the creation. It must be confessed there is no very direct evidence on the subject. There is no positiye, unequivocal command. It is left to more or less convincing inferences. There is no evidence against it, and this must count for something, while there are a number of incidental considerations that weigh in its favor. While there are no evidences on one side, less is required on the other.

To most minds, Gen. 2 : 2 - 3, is convincing. —"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh

day from all his work which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from his work which God created and made." The Hebrew word for sabbath simply means rest, so that when God "rested" on the seventh day he really kept it as a sabbath. Here is a clear example. God kept a sabbath. As we are made in his image and likeness, so it seems fitting, if not necessary, that man also should keep a sabbath, after six days of labor. God did not need to tell man of his experiences, only as they were designed for man's advantage, so it would seem that by the telling of it, he intended his example to be followed by man. Then, as God does nothing without an object, what object could he have in blessing and sanctifying the day, if not to give eminence over the other six days, and to commend it to man for a higher service than is given to them?

Whether Adam and Eve kept a sabbath, we do not know. We have no information on the subject. Cain and Abel brought their offerings, Gen. 4:3, "in process of time." But it might be rendered, and perhaps ought to be, "at the end of days." Such a rendering justifies an inference that it was at the end of the week, on the sabbath. Then, while not mentioning a sabbath specifically, the scriptures often speak of a period of seven days. In Noah's time, Gen. 7:4, it is said, "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain." "After seven days" the waters came. The dove was sent out the second and third time "after seven days." Joseph and his brethren, Gen. 50:10, mourned "seven days" for their father, Jacob. Such quotations might be multiplied.

Moreover, the old Assyrians, from whom the Jews descended, gave great prominence to the number seven, especially as applied to days. The same custom obtained among most of the nations of antiquity, as is universally admitted, and we are now digging up evidences of it in the cuniform inscriptions of the cities of Mesopotamia, in the valley of the Euphrates, near where our race was born.

Other nations have a similar record. Homer, the great Greek, says, "Afterwards came the seventh, the sacred day." Hesiod, another Greek, says, "The seventh day is holy." Lucian says, "The seventh day is given to school-boys, as a holiday." Calimachus speaks of the seventh day as holy. Porphyry says, "The Phenicians consecrated one day in seven as holy." Josephus says, "There is no city, either of Greeks or barbarians, or any other nation, where the religion of the sabbath is not known." Grotius says, "The memory of the creation being formed in seven days was preserved not only among the Greeks and Italians, but among the Celts and (east) Indians, all of whom divided their time into weeks." Eusebias says, "Almost all the philosophers and poets acknowledge the seventh day as holy."

Now, whence came this almost universal prominence of the number seven, especially seven days? It corresponds to no natural period of time, nor with any known historical fact, outside the idea of the sabbath. It did not come from the Jews, for it existed long before their time. If a sabbath was instituted at the creation, and was more or less generally observed by the ante-Mosaic nations, that will account for it. But there is nothing else,

either known or supposed to exist, among the nations anterior to Moses, that will account for it. If that is not the explanation, it is an accepted fact without even a proposed explanation.

The strong presumption therefore is that what is referred to in Gen. 2: 2, 3, was understood and accepted at the time as establishing a sabbath, and that a sabbath was extensively known and observed long before the time of Moses. There are not many points, affecting an equal antiquity, that are better established, or as well. It may safely be taken as an accepted fact.

Since the time of Moses and the Decalogue, there is no question—the Jews have had a sabbath, though perhaps not without interruption. And God deemed that sabbath of sufficient importance to emphasize it in one of the ten great commandments from Sinai. He had emphasized it before by his example at the creation. Lest the world should forget, he increases the emphasis by the thunderings of the sacred mountain. The "sabbath is made for man." It is important as a rest for the recuperation of the body from the wear of six days of labor. It is more important as a rest for the mind, after six days of intellectual toil. It is still more important for the recuperation of the moral nature, after six days of contact with temptation and sin. Man, therefore, is by all possible means to be kept from forgetting it, or neglecting it. He can do so only at his own great loss, and perhaps a greater loss through him to his posterity.

A singular, though not altogether unaccountable, fallacy has crept into a large part of the discussion of the sabbath. It is that there was one, and one

only, particular day for the starting point of the original week, and the count must necessarily be kept up in uninterrupted succession from that week, or we do not, and cannot, properly keep a sabbath. It follows, too, if this doctrine is true, that no man can be sure he is rightly keeping a sabbath, or in fact keeping it at all, unless he is sure he is keeping a day in an uninterrupted succession of seven days from that first starting point, almost six thousand years ago. As no one can know this, hence, according to this idea, no one can know whether he is keeping a sabbath or not. There are, indeed, six chances to one that he is not—no matter what day he keeps. The Lord has not placed us in such a dilemma as this.

The fallacy has perhaps grown out of the use of the word "seventh." But, the conclusion does not follow. It only follows that after six days of labor there shall be one of rest. It does not at all identify the starting point of the six days. The idea probably originated when the six days of creation were thought to be six literal days. But it is now practically conceded on all hands that the six creation days were not literal days of twenty-four hours, but indefinitely long periods of time. The beginning of a period of seven literal days cannot, therefore, be reckoned from the end of seven indefinitely long periods of time. If the views of some geologists are accepted, that the several days of creation were longer than the earth has yet existed since the close of the sixth day of creation, we are yet in the Lord's great sabbath, and it is not yet time for ours to begin.

Nor does the fourth commandment fix the day of

beginning. It says, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God," etc. This is precisely what both Jews and Christians alike do, notwithstanding they keep different days of the week. "Six days" alike both work, and then keep the "seventh" as "the sabbath of the Lord." There is absolutely nothing in the scriptures commanding the six days to begin at any particular day, or stating as a fact when the original week did begin.

In the time of Moses, the week began with the giving of the manna. But why the manna began the day it did, we have no certain means of knowing. That it began with an uninterrupted succession of seven days from the end of creation, there is not only not a single shred of evidence, but it is against the probabilities of the case. Twenty-five hundred years had elapsed. Dynasty after dynasty had arisen and been conquered by a different people, in turn to be conquered by some other nation or race. There were no arts, no literature, no history—save uncertain and conflicting oral traditions, among entirely uncultivated peoples. It is simply inconceivable that under such circumstances an uninterrupted succession of days should have been preserved.

The probability is that the manna came on the first day it was needed, and neither before nor after. God does nothing without a reason. In the experience of the Jews, there came a time when their food resources were exhausted. They had nothing to eat. They were hungry. In less than a week, they would starve. It does not appear that God waited a single day after their need began. As

soon as they needed it, whatever day it was, God gave the manna. After performing six days of work in gathering it, Moses says of the seventh day, "This is the sabbath (rest) of the Lord." You have worked six days, you must rest a day now, "as the Lord hath commanded."

It may perhaps be conceded that probably the Jews preserved an uninterrupted succession of days from that time to the time of the Savior. But it is by no means certain. This covers a period of fifteen hundred years. The Jews were several times conquered, and at one time were captives in Babylon for seventy years. They often grievously backslided, and neglected almost everything connected with their religion. They may also have neglected and forgotten the sabbath. There is certainly no conclusive evidence that they did not, with but too many probabilities that they did.

Then the Old Testament is the divinely-given history of both those periods. It is fair to presume that it gives us all facts essential, either to men's salvation in those times, or to our proper observance of God's law. But it is absolutely silent as to any conclusive evidence on these points. It neither tells us on what particular day the week began, either from the creation, or at the time of Moses, nor does it give us any information whatever as to whether the seventh day in the time of Christ was in uninterrupted succession from the original and first seventh day. The plain conclusion is that both are matters of no importance, or the Old Testament would have enlightened us concerning them. To assume that we know, or can know, either of these things, is to assume to be "wise

above what is written." And yet, there are certain sabbatizers and Judaizers, who assume as indisputably true these five things, concerning which they know nothing, and can know nothing, namely: 1. That the sabbath originally occurred on a specific day; 2. That we know what day it was; 3. That the sabbath was kept up on that day until the time of Moses; 4. That Moses put the Jewish sabbath on the same day; and, 5. That the Jews kept that day in uninterrupted succession until the time of Christ—and then proceed to arraign everybody who does not believe all these unproved and unprovable things, as such flagrant transgressors against God as to be in danger of hell-fire. Can human conceit and arrogance go very much beyond that?

Were the specific day of any such transcendent importance as that, it would exalt the outward and ceremonial over the inner and the spiritual. The outward is only the necessary garment of the inward—as the body is the garment of the soul. The ceremonial is only the manifestation of the fundamental experience. The garment changes, the inner life remains. The body decays, the soul lives. Ceremonials change with dispensations, the experience it shows forth changes not and is eternal.

"The sabbath is for man, and not man for the sabbath." The sabbath is for the purpose of building up manhood, and not man for the purpose of upholding a ceremonial. The day is incidental, and only a means to an end. That end is the all-important thing, not the means. The means may change with circumstances and dispensations. The

end sought must ever be exalted over ceremonials, and never changes. The day is no more the sabbath than is my garment myself—no more than is my perishing body the immortal man that temporarily dwells within it. The day is no fundamental part or the sabbath, but only incidental, and may be changed, without at all impairing any of its essential elements.

II.—WHAT CONSTITUTES A SABBATH?

1.—Rest From Labor.

The leading idea of the original announcement is that of *Rest*. God rested, and so man should rest. God rested from the physical work of creation—making a world and a full complement of animals and things therein—and so man should rest from physical labor. He is so constituted that he needs it for physical recuperation and development. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is the old adage. Constant physical toil will not accomplish so much in the long run as six days of toil and one of rest. Constant toil will also reduce the quantity, even more than the quality of labor. A jaded horse never works up to his best. A worn-down farmer plans poorly, works feebly, and secures only a second or third rate crop—which he probably sells at a disadvantage.

But absolute inaction is not rest. If any one imagines it is, let him make the experiment. He will speedily find that doing absolutely nothing is the hardest kind of work. He will soon beg to split rails, or carry a hod up three stories, as a relief. After a man has stood an hour on one foot, it is rest to stand ten minutes on the other. So the

rest of the sabbath is not absolute inaction—for that would weary him—but comparative inaction. The man who sleeps all day on Sunday is not so well rested on Monday, as he who changes his action and exercises enough to attend church. It is a change of action, and a lessening of it, rather than entire inaction, that constitutes rest. Great and violent contrasts weary. From violent action to entire inaction is wearisome, not restful. Keep the blood moving, but not so violently—that is best—is rest—so far as it goes, is a sabbath.

But God also worked intellectually on the six days. Creation is a far more wonderful exhibition of brain-work than of manual labor. To this day, we have only begun to uncover the intellectual marvels displayed in the adaptations and interworkings of creative mind. The labor of the divine mind is far above even that of the divine hand. And so, as God ceased from his intellectual work on the sabbath, so should we. It is to be a rest to brain as well as muscle. Brain can better drive an over-worked hand, than can an over-worked brain skillfully guide even a rested hand. But, for the best results, both hand and brain must rest—imperatively needs the sabbath.

Yet some of the demands for the sabbath require some men to work, sometimes with both hand and brain. When the ox or the ass falls into the pit on the sabbath, both brains and hands must unite to extricate him therefrom. When the flame would consume your neighbor's house or goods, we must put to and help him. When accident or peril comes on the sabbath, the physician must be called, and the necessary aid rendered. So, too, when

the congregation has gathered on the sabbath, the preacher must labor with brain and nerve, harder than the sweating worker in the haryest field or at the forge . Otherwise, other ends of the sabbath could not be attained.

In such cases, Monday must be the sabbath to the necessary Sunday toilers. They cannot get the needed rest on Sunday, and if our sabbatizing friends are right could not get it at all. But they can still obey the command, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh is the sabbath of thy Lord; in it thou shalt do no work" —by commencing their work on Tuesday, and resting on "Blue Monday." They secure all that is fundamental and essential, though they do not observe the circumstantial and ceremonial. They perhaps do not tithe the mint, the anise and the cummin. But they regard "the weightier matters of the law." They have obeyed God better than to have observed punctilios of days and seasons, and left human interests and men's souls out of the account. They have kept the sabbath after a divine sort.

Another form of rest, is a moral rest. We do not so plainly see it. But God's moral attributes were at work in the creation to secure the best moral results to the universe. No one will question this. This was, indeed, the highest manifestation of his work. To make a huge globe of rocks and minerals, and gases, and water, and atmosphere, was a wondrous thing. To adapt each part and thing to every other part and thing and make each and all so interwork, is still more wondrous. But, to make all subserve the best inter-

ests and welfare, both of each part by itself, and of all as a unitary whole, towers transcendently above both the others. God is not only great and wise. He is transcendently good.

And God rested also from his moral work. Moral force needs recuperation and rest. And we have an added need. We are fallen, and subjects to temptation and trial. After six week days of contact and conflict with depravity and sin, we especially need a seventh day of relief and rest from them, when we can gather into the sanctuary of the Lord, and take in fatness and strength in his house and from his presence. We flee from the world away. We gather with the saints. We worship before the Lord. We learn of his will. We breathe in of his spirit. We gain strength for another week's work and conflict, This is moral rest—highest of all the uses of the sabbath—that which brings us nearest on earth to "the rest that remaineth to the people of God," in heaven—the great heavenly sabbath.

2.—Recognition and Worship of God.

To keep the sabbath in recognition of God's work in creation is not only a declaration of his existence, but is an acknowledgment of him as the supreme creator and governor, and so is a confession of our obligation to worship him. It is not necessarily a confession of our fallen estate. The sabbath hinges entirely on what took place before man fell. But it still fits in admirably with our necessities after the fall. Before the fall, we needed to acknowledge, to honor, and to worship God,

and for this, as well as for rest, we needed the sabbath. Since the fall, we need it for the added purpose of a worship that regenerates the soul, delivers us from sin, and overmasters depravity. As the fall took place so soon after God's resting from his work, the sabbath has practically always been for fallen man.

There is worship that is not connected with the sabbath. The worship of the family and the closet is an everyday affair, confined to no particular time. There is the constant worship of the heart, going up to God at all times, and from all places, amid all surroundings. These need no sabbath, and are as binding without one as with one.

But man is a social being. "No man liveth unto himself." He is linked to others by ties he cannot break. Most of the experiences of life are shared, more or less, in common with others. Religion and worship are no exceptions. In some respects, they are private and personal. But in others, they are associated and public. For these, there must necessarily be some set and recognized time. Such a time is virtually a sabbath—a release and rest from the toils and weariness of other days, to come together for a common recognition of a common creator, and for the common worship of a common master and benefactor. Thus the law of sabbath worship is written in man's nature and demanded by his circumstances.

Under the Jewish sabbath, worship was mostly social. It consisted principally in reading and explaining the law, and in singing. Ezra, in his time, read the law, and "gave the sense thereof." In the Savior's time, they gave him the book, in the

Synagogue, and he read and proceeded to say "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ear," explaining its meaning, that he himself was the Christ, the Anointed of God. The scriptures were not then in every one's house. They were seldom to be seen, except in the Synagogues; and, even there, they were not accessible to the mass of the people. The only way, or at least the principal way to know the law was to attend the Synagogue and listen to its reading and exposition, which therefore took up so large a portion of fts service.

Wherever their circumstances and disposition favored, the singing constituted a considerable portion of the service, and was often elaborate and showy. It was not only accompanied with various musical instruments, but was performed by trained bands, in what is known as antiphonal singing. The choir was divided into two parts, occupying opposite sides of the house. One part sang one strain, or verse, and then the other responded with a second strain, or verse. Accordingly, the Psalms, which were the Jewish hymn book, are largely arranged in couplets, or pairs, the second verse being an answer or response to the first, and so continuing through the whole Psalm. For instance, take the 124th Psalm. The first part say:—

"If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, now may Israel say;"

To which the others respond:—

"If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, when men arose up against us;"

The first part then says:—

"Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled but a little;"

The second part again responding:—

"Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul;"

And so the responsive service goes on to the end of the Psalm.

It is a mistake to suppose, as many do, that the book of Psalms was all written by David and Solomon, or even in their time. Turn to the 137th Psalm, and any one can see that it was not written until after the captivity at Babylon, generations after the time of David and Solomon. So of many others. In fact, the book, as we have it, was not made up until after the building of the second temple. Parts of it, no doubt, were used in the first temple. Additions were made for the second temple — much as the present Methodist hymn book is made up largely of the hymns of Charles and John Wesley, but with additions by later writers.

3.—Propagandism.

In the Christian Sabbath, these services of reading, of exposition, and of singing, are retained, with slight modifications. But a new element is introduced. The Jews never made their sabbath a means of propagandism. It was a service for themselves alone. But the Christians found their assemblies, both in Judea and among the gentiles, attended by a multitude of unbelievers. So it was but natural that they *preach* to them, to convince them of the truthfulness of Christianity, and to persuade them to repent. On one of the first of these sabbaths, the most celebrated human sermon ever delivered—both for convincing the intellect and moving the heart—was preached to a

multitude, composed of representatives from all the adjacent nations

This sermon was called out by a situation that made it a virtual necessity. Peter would have been recreant to his Lord had he held his peace. But Paul, 1 Cor. 1:21, affirms that this preaching is an arrangement sanctioned by the divine pleasure. God has made it a part of the divine economy under the gospel, and so a proper and necessary part of the services of the Christian sabbath. Paul even exalts it to the importance of being an agency by which God has determined to "save" men. By this addition, the Christian sabbath is more, and has more, of fundamental elements, than were ever in the Jewish sabbath.

But, clearly, if these, and such as these, constitute the fundamental elements of the sabbath, there is small place left for a particular day. One day can subserve all these as well as another. To be sure, the day must be a seventh after six days of labor. But the first day of labor may be on either of the numerical days, and six days after that would be the "seventh." It is necessary, too, to constitute a proper sabbath, that the people generally observe the same day. But there is nothing in any of the seven days of the week, in consequence of which it could not be selected as the first day, or the seventh. There is also nothing in any of the objects of the sabbath that cannot be attained by locating it on any of the days of the week.

III.—THE DAY OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

There is no question as to the day of the Jewish sabbath. It had the sanction of God, through the

mouth of Moses. Though not certainly, it was probably, kept up in uninterrupted succession to the time of Christ. Yet it is not a matter of moment whether it was or not. After six days of labor, it was a seventh of rest, and so it met the requirement both of the original and the Mosaic command.

But now comes a new dispensation. The law of Moses, Mat. 5:18, is "fulfilled," to the last "jot and tittle." A new dispensation comes in, with a new testament, new ordinances, and new observances. "The law and the prophets were until John." From that time to Pentecost, there is a state of transition, preparing the way for the church and service of the Messiah. At Pentecost, it is fully set up. In it, Jewish observances find no place. Circumcision, the passover, their feasts, their fasts, their multiplicity of sabbaths, all go by the board.

Some think baptism comes in the place of circumcision — though Paul says, Rom. 2:29, that Christian circumcision is a matter of "the heart"— the Lord's Supper comes in the place of the passover," etc. This is a matter of much doubt. But, if they do, they are all changed. Not one of them is transferred literally and without change into the new dispensation. What reason, therefore, to expect an exception in favor of the seventh day sabbath? There is none. If all the rest disappear, the presumption is that this solitary one will go with them.

The sabbath law is incorporated into the Ten Commandments. But we have seen that the fourth commandment does not fix the day. That was fixed

for that time and dispensation by the appearance of the manna, as the beginning of their six days of work—in gathering the manna. All that is in the fourth commandment—six days of work, followed by one of rest— is as much in the Christian sabbath, as it was in the Jewish. The day, and the death-penalty for picking up sticks on it, together with all the other ceremonials connected with it, as well as with other things, do not appear under the new, and better, and higher, and more spiritual order of things.

It is a mistake to assume that the day has been changed. There is no more propriety in assuming that than to assume that the passover has been changed to the communion. The passover was done away with. That was the end of it. Christ instituted another observance, bearing some semblance to it. That is what there is of it, and all there is of it. Likewise, the Jewish sabbath was done away with. It ended with its dispensation, along with the passover, circumcision, and other things. Christ has instituted another sabbath—another day of rest and of religious observance, bearing considerable semblance to it, and to subserve a similar but higher purpose. We observe it not at all because the Jews had a sabbath, but because Jesus established this one.

So, too, it is unnecessary to find a specific statement of his establishing baptism or the communion. He observed them; and so we find him observing a Christian sabbath, the day of his resurrection—the first one that could be observed. So, also, he observed the second one, the eighth day after—giving twice as much observance to it as to either

baptism or the communion. He commanded his disciples to baptize, though no more telling them he had established baptism as an ordinance, than that he had established the day of his resurrection as a sabbath. So he virtually commanded them to sabbatize—that is, to meet for rest and religious observance—the eighth day after. One of his statements—"as oft as ye do this"—implies that the communion was to be perpetuated. But it is not a command, and is only incidental, introduced for another purpose.

The first Christian sabbath grew necessarily out of the circumstances. The disciples met together on that day, and engaged in rest and worship, because from the condition of affairs it was virtually impossible for them to do otherwise. But it is more of a problem how they came to be together the second one, for the same purpose. From their Jewish antecedents, it seems more likely that they would have assembled on Saturday. But, if they did, Jesus did not meet them. But now, from some cause, they are assembled on Sunday, and Jesus meets with them. Indeed, they seem to have expected him, and Thomas is careful to be present, that he may not suffer a repetition of his experience a week before. Why are they together? How is it that they seem to have expected him? Is there any other reasonable explanation, than that Jesus "had appointed them" to meet him then and there, as we are told he did subsequently in Galilee. In fact, that seems the only reasonable explanation of the meeting—the second sabbath service of the Christian church. He certainly sanctioned it by his presence and observance.

Four Sundays now pass without any certain statements of how they were observed. Yet it is probable that the apppointed time in Galilee was on one of them. It is still more probable that the day he met "more than five hundred brethren at once" was by appointment, and on a (new) sabbath, and also in Galilee. Else how came so many to be together at one time and place? It is moreover probable that the ascension was also on such an appointed or understood sabbath,* so many were present.

But, now comes the seventh—a sabbath of sabbaths—the day of Pentecost. The matter has been so noised abroad, and become so well understood, that, besides a large company of disciples, there were more than three thousand gathered together, including people from all adjacent nationalities. Clearly, these Christians were making a great day of their new sabbath. And then, after Peter's sermon, the divine spirit came down in most wonderful power, to attest and consecrate this sabbath service.

Nor did this first day of the week sabbath service die out. Twenty-five years later, we find Paul observing it at Troas, Acts 20:7, 8, celebrating the communion and preaching. About the same time, he writes to the Corinthians, as he says he had also instructed the churches of Galatia, 1 Cor. 16:1,2, that they should utilize the first day of the week, or Christian sabbath, by bringing in their gifts for the (poor) "saints." At a still later date, John, too, Rev. 1:10, became so filled with the Spirit, on this

* Barnabas, in his epistle, says of Sunday—"On which Jesus arose from the dead, and also visibly ascended into heaven."—Epistle, Chap. 13:10.

Christian sabbath, or Lord's day, that he was inspired to preach his (written) sermon to the seven churches of Asia.

These references show that the first or Lord's day had secured a place among the stated observances of the church, not in one place alone, but in widely separated parts of the church—in Judea, in Corinth, in Galatia, in Patmos—and had maintained that position from the first for nearly seventy years, and until the time of the writing of the last books of the New Testament. Moreover, John's reference, in writing to the seven churches of Asia, and also to the church at large, to "The Lord's Day," implies that those churches and the church at large had a full understanding of what the Lord's day was. It was so well understood that he did not need to stop and explain.

As a matter of fact, and as is sufficiently shown from both the New Testament and outside church history, and is nowhere denied, Christians from the outset have observed the first day of the week as a Christian sabbath. For a time, the Jewish converts also observed the Jewish sabbath—keeping two sabbaths. They probably kept the Jewish sabbath, as they did also circumcision, partly because of failing clearly to see that they were "fulfilled," and so done away by Christ, and partly because the assemblies of Jews on that day provided a fitting opportunity to preach Christ to their Jewish brethren. But in process of time, and at a not very late period, this keeping of the Jewish sabbath was given up, and only the first-day sabbath was perpetuated.

Very soon after the finishing of the New Testa-

ment, Ignatius, who was a companion of apostles, says:—

"Let us no more sabbatize," that is, keep the Jewish sabbath, "but let us keep the Lord's day, on which our Life arose."—*Epistle to the Magnesians, Chap. 3:3.*

Barnabas, a companion of St. Paul, in his epistle, written soon after, said,

"Your (Jewish) new moons and your sabbaths, I cannot bear them. Consider what he means by it. The sabbaths, said he, which ye now keep, are not acceptable to me, but those which I have made; when resting from all things, I shall begin the eighth day, that is, the beginning of the other world. For which cause, we observe the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead."—*Chap. 13:9, 10.*

Justin Martyr, who was beheaded, A. D. 165, in his Apology, Chap. LXVII, says:—

"But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because Jesus Christ, our Savior, on the same day rose from the dead."

He also says:—

"On the Lord's day, all Christians in the city, or country, meet together, because this is the day of our Lord's resurrection, and then we read the writings of the apostles and prophets: this being done, the president (leader) makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate, and to practice the things they have heard; then we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the sacrament. Then they who are able, and willing, give what they think proper, and what is collected is laid up in the hands of the president, who distributes it to orphans and widows, and other necessitous Christians, as their wants require."

Bardesanes, of Edessa, A. D. 120, in his Book of the Laws, says:—

"On one day, the first of the week, we assembled ourselves together."

Clement, of Alexandria, A. D. 194, Book 7, Chap. XII, says:—

"He, in the fulfilment of the precept, according to the gospel, keeps the Lord's day, when he abandons an evil disposition, glorifying the Lord's resurrection in himself."

Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, in the second century, says:—

"Both custom and reason challenge from us that we should honor the Lord's day, seeing that on that day he rose from the dead."

Ireneus, bishop of Lyons, about the same time, says:—

"On the Lord's day, every one of us, Christians, keeps the sabbath, meditating in the law, and rejoicing in the works of God."

Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who also lived more than a hundred years before the time of Constantine, says:—

"Today we celebrate the Lord's holy day, when we read your epistle to us."—*Epistle to Soter.*

Tertullian, of Africa, A. D. 200, in his Apology, Chap. XVI, says:—

"We solemnize the day after Saturday, in contradiction to those who call this day, (Saturday,) their sabbath."

Cyprian, also of Africa, epistle 58, section 4, says:—

"The eighth day; that is, the first day after the sabbath, and the Lord's day."

The Apostolic Constitutions, about A. D. 250, says:—

"On the day of our Lord's resurrection, which is the Lord's day, meet more diligently."

Anatolius, of Asia, A. D. 270, Chap. X, says:—

"Our regard for the Lord's resurrection, which took place on the Lord's day, will lead us to celebrate it."

Peter, bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 306, Canon 15, says:—

"But the Lord's day we celebrate as a day of joy, because on it he rose again."

Eusebius, the first church historian, in speaking of those before Abraham, says:—

"They did not therefore regard circumcision, nor observe the Jewish sabbath, neither do we." Book I, chap. 4.

In speaking of the heretical Ebionites, he says:—

"They also observe the sabbath and other disciples of the Jews, but on the other hand, they also celebrate the Lord's day, very much like us, in commemoration of his resurrection."—Book II, chap. 27.

He also says:—

"From the beginning, Christians assembled on the first day of the week, called by them 'The Lord's Day,' for the purpose of religious worship, to read the Scriptures, to preach, and to celebrate the Lord's Supper."

Neander, the celebrated modern church historian, vol. 1, p. 295, says:—

"Thus in the Catholic epistle ascribed to Barnabas, at the close of the 15th chapter, Sunday is designated as the day of jubilee, in remembrance of Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven, and of the new creation which then commenced; and in the epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians it is presupposed that even the Jews who had come over to Christianity substituted Sunday in the place of the sabbath. As the sabbath was regarded as representing Judaism, Sunday was contemplated as a symbol of the new life consecrated to the risen Christ, and grounded on his resurrection. Sunday was distinguished as a day of joy, by being exempted from fasts, and by the circumstance that prayer was performed on this day in a standing, and not in a kneeling posture, as Christ, by his resurrection, had raised up fallen man again to heaven."

Gieseler's history of the Church, vol. 1, p. 93, says:—

"Sunday, as the day of Christ's resurrection, was devoted to religious services."

Prof. Fisher's church history, p. 40, says:—

"The Jewish Christians at first frequented the synagogues. They continued to observe the festivals appointed by the law. ..... They kept the sabbath on Saturday. ..... But, side by side with this observance, there grew up the custom of meeting for Christian worship on the first day of the week, the day of the Lord's resurrection ..... the first steps in the rise of an institution that was to supersede the weekly observance of the Old Testament, and to commemorate the world's redemption, as that had been a memorial of its creation."

Some suppose that the first-day sabbath owed its universal observance to the decree of Constantine. It is true that Constantine decreed the partial observance of the Christian sabbath. But it is also true that at the same time he decreed Christianity to be the religion of the Roman empire.* As well, therefore, say that Christianity itself owes its existence to Constantine's decree, as to say that its sabbath does. As a matter of well-established history, the first-day sabbath prevailed everywhere in the church, as did Christianity everywhere in the Roman empire, long before the time of the decree. Indeed, the new sabbath prevailed in the church before Christianity did in the empire; and Constantine proclaimed his vision of the cross-sign in the heavens, with its "*In hoc signo vinces*," † and issued his decree making Christianity the religion of the empire, only after Christianity had itself conquered the empire, and made it politic for him to profess conversion and issue his decree. Constantine, in respect to both points, only recognized what was already in existence, and prevalent and

* In the year, A. D. 324. † By this sign conquer.

powerful enough to live without his decree. In fact, his decree only hindered Christianity, instead of helping it, as all confess. Both Christianity and its sabbath were the weaker, not the stronger for it.

The Christian sabbath therefore owes its existence, not to the Jewish law, but to the example of Christ, of apostles, and of the church. That they rested and worshipped on the first day of the week, from the first until now, is beyond all question. It rests therefore upon substantially the same authority as baptism and the Lord's supper. Neither of them are directly commanded. All three of them are inferentially so. Probably all were commanded by the unrecorded directions of the Master; so that the apostles had his word, as well as his example, for authority. However this may be, we now have both his example and theirs, to which is also added the example of the universal church—for the examples of seventh-day sabbath-keeping in the Christian Church is hardly more than a drop in the bucket, and the principal one, at the outset, among the Jewish Christians, nearly died out under the eyes of the apostles themselves.

Christ had before given the apostles especial authority in his church, John 20:23, and even before that had given similar authority to Peter, Mat. 16:18, 19, and had even delegated to the body of the primitive disciples, Mat. 18:18, power to "bind" and "loose" on earth. While individual apostles and local bodies of Christians sometimes made mistakes, as Peter at Antioch, Gal. 2:11, and as the whole body, in having "all things common," Acts 2:44, yet it has always been acknowledged by all Christians, that where apostolic and primitive

example was acquiesced in by all, it is a sufficient law to the church.

It does not appear that any one objected to making the first day, or Lord's day, a day of rest and worship, even by those Jewish converts who for a time also kept the Jewish sabbath. On the contrary, it is pretty evident that they all gave special honor and observance to this day—in fact, used it as a sabbath, omitting some of the ceremonial of the Jewish sabbath, and making it an occasion of "gladness," on account of the resurrection, and also to preach Christ to unbelievers. To this, is to be added Christ's own undoubted observance of the first two first-days, and his possible, if not probable, observance of the two or three next following ones —for the ascension, after "forty days," Acts 1:3, which Barnabas' epistle says was on a sabbath,* was only a short time, probably just a week, before Pentecost.

On this evidence, we rest the Christian sabbath We seek, and we desire, no other. This is sufficient. It is as firm and immovable a foundation as the evidence for the other two special Christian observances, baptism and the Lord's supper.

This, however, may be added. As the Christian sabbath has the same objects, rest and worship, as the Jewish, with the added one of preaching, or propagandism, so the need of observing it is not only as great as that of observing the Jewish sabbath, but much greater. Hence, it is even much more important that Christians keep it, than it was

* "*En ei kai ho Iasous anestan ek nekron kai phanerotheis anebe eis tous ouranous.*" (On which Jesus rose from the dead, and also visibly ascended into heaven.) Neander's History, Vol. 1. p. 259. Also Barnabas' Epistle, Chap. 13:9,10.

that the Jews keep theirs, and our sin in neglecting it is greater than was theirs in neglecting their sabbath. The ante-Mosaic sabbath was to commemorate creation, the Mosaic to commemorate that, and, Deut. 5:15, the deliverance from Egypt, the Christian to commemorate creation, deliverance from a worse bondage than that of Egypt, and especially Christ's triumph over death, in the resurrection. Therefore, it is the greatest and best of the three—the culmination of God's sabbath-gifts to man.

IV.—HOW TO OBSERVE THE SABBATH.

This point has been largely anticipated in considering "what constitutes a sabbath," and what was said there need not be repeated here.

It is evident that in being "made for man," it contemplates the highest interests of the race. It is to be observed especially for the promotion of human welfare, and that is always to be kept in mind, rather than punctillious ceremonials; so that whatever subserves these highest interests is lawful on that day, while other, and especially selfish and wordly things, are not. Nor must it be forgotten that it is man's religious interests that are to be especially promoted. The six days are for subsistence and worldly interests. The seventh is for God's glory and human salvation. Works of mercy are to be done. The ox is to be rescued from the pit, the sick are to be cared for, necessary attention to animals, machinery and the like, is to be given. But these are only incidental, like eating and dressing.

Sunday visiting may be made a means of helping

our fellows on the way to heaven. But it is very seldom so used. It is generally an occasion of family, social or worldly conversation—often degenerating into scandal—and in such cases is a plain violation of the spirit and object of the sabbath, and a means of hindering, instead of helping, human welfare and Christ's cause. Even church members will often stay away from the sanctuary when a visitor calls on Sunday, instead of taking him along to church, and having it known among all their friends, as it ought to be, that they will not stay away from church on account of visitors.

This visiting generally becomes a grievous evil where there is preaching on but one or two sabbaths a month. Instead ot it, there should be a social service every Sunday when there is no preaching. A deacon, or some other brother, or sister, should lead the service, and draw out and encourage the promising gifts in the church. Many a one will thus find out that God is calling him to the ministry, who would not otherwise discover it. Moreover, if rightly conducted, such services, by their variety and the originality they encourage, often become among the most interesting and profitable of all the services of the church. The little girl was not far wrong, when she said she liked the social meeting best, "because they all preached."

There is a gift in the church, that is altogether too much overlooked. There are many brethren, and sometimes sisters, engaged in ordinary avocations, and who should never leave them, who still have gifts, that, as lay preachers, will both interest and profit their neighbors, in addressing them on the themes of the gospel. Such are frequently

spoiled by being ordained as ministers. As one of themselves, the people hear them gladly. But when they are put up as ordained preachers, their audiences judge them by a different standard, and tire of them. Let them remain where they were, and exercise their gifts simply as laymen, and they may be a power for good.

There is a difficulty connected with this, in that it frequently happens that some brethren have such high opinions of themselves as to think they are exactly the right ones for such a service, while the brethren generally and the public have a different opinion; and, on the other hand, those fittest for the work are frequently diffident, and need to be urged forward. The best way, probably, is to have a committee of the church, with the pastor at its head, to decide and settle such matters. This will restrain the too forward, and draw out the too diffident.

However matters are managed, three things should be secured:—1. Such services should be maintained as will lead Christians to the highest attainments in the divine life. Nor is it well to be so afraid of perversions of the doctrines of holiness and sanctification, as to overlook the prime and indispensable importance of such attainments. The best things are always counterfeited. But this is no discredit to the genuine. 2. It must be kept up all along the line, and all the time, that one purpose of the church is to nurture the weak, to restrain and help the wayward, to encourage the halting and desponding, and reclaim the erring. Many churches, perhaps most, come far short of their duty in these directions. 3. A third purpose

is pulling down the strongholds of satan, and upbuilding God's cause. Christians are here to do Christ's work, "in Christ's stead," and woe is unto them if they neglect it.

In doing this, every member, no matter how obscure or weak, should bear a part. There should be no drones in the Christian hive—not one. Even the aged and the sick can find work to do. And this, as before said, should be done by organization and appointment. Then no available agency should be neglected. The Salvation Army is shaming the rest of the church for so long neglecting powerful means of doing good. Young Men's Christian Associations, and Societies of Christian Endeavor, as well as earlier the Sunday School, have only appropriated agencies that the church should have used long ago. With all our increasing agencies and activities, the church of to-day is not putting forth half her possible power.

II—BAPTISM.

I.—DUTY OF WATER BAPTISM.

The Great Commission, Mat. 28:19, says:—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them," etc. Now, if it is the duty of the ministry to baptize, it is equally the duty of disciples to be baptized. Mark puts it in quite as expressive a form, 16:16—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—putting baptism in close connection with one's salvation—too close to make it a wise thing to neglect it.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:38, says to the penitent enquiry—"What shall we do?"

"Repent *and be baptized*, every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Ananias said to Paul, at Damascus, Acts 22:16, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." Philip, too, so preached to the eunuch, Acts 8:36-38, that he perceived it to be his first duty, after believing, to be baptized; and so, instead of waiting, even to get home, he asked immediate baptism at Philip's hands. Paul, too, so preached to the Phillipian jailor, Acts 16:33, that he did not even wait for the morning, but was baptized, "the same hour of the night." Everywhere in the New Testament, baptism is both commanded and practiced in close connection with conversion.

On this point of the duty of baptism, there has never been any serious question in the history of the church, The Quakers, in properly resisting undue tendencies to outward observances, questioned it. But, while the church has agreed with them as to the greater importance of the spiritual life, they made no headway in persuading men that the outward observance, corresponding to the inward fact, is not required of all disciples. It cannot be neglected, without disobeying the positive command of both the Master and the apostles—too positive and too plain to be disregarded.

That this baptism is a water baptism is evident from the fact that the apostles so understood the matter, and proceeded to obey the command by administering a water baptism. We cannot assume that it was any other kind of baptism without assuming that they did not understand the Mas-

ter, and that we are wiser than were both they and the whole church hitherto. Moreover, those thus commanded to baptize were men, who could not administer any other supposable baptism than a water baptism. If Jesus meant any other, he commanded them to do an impossibility—a thing we can hardly charge him with doing. Hence, it is very plain that this baptism is both a duty, and is a water baptism.

II.—SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

Very early in the history of the church, the idea began to prevail that baptism was necessary to salvation. If that were the case, then it seemed necessary that infants should be baptized, in order that they might be saved. But infants cannot believe, and so it would farther follow that believing, or faith, (conversion,) is not essential to baptism. It is said that sponsors believe for them. But this is impossible. No one can believe for another. Claiming to do so, or pretending to do so, is only a sham and a delusion. But, if baptism without believing is essential to the salvation of the infant, why not of the adult also? In fact, some do nowadays teach that baptism is at least one of the steps, or antecedents, to conversion; and so, of course, it is not converted persons who are the subjects of baptism, but simply penitents, seeking salvation.

There are several passages in the New Testament, that some understand as teaching this doctrine. One is Mark 16:16.—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Another is Acts 2:38.—"Repent and be baptized, every one of you

for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." A third is Acts 22:16. —"Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Another passage, much relied on, is John 3:5.— "Born of water and of the spirit." Upon their face, these passages seem to imply that baptism is an agent in washing away sins, and that it precedes conversion. But the seeming is not always the real. Jesus says of the bread of the communion, "This is my body," and of the wine, "This is my blood;" and so seems to teach the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation as fully as the above passages seem to teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, or baptism as antecedent and necessary to conversion. But the whole Protestant world unites in believing that these passages do not in fact mean what upon their face they seem to mean. They do not mean that the bread and wine are the actual body and blood of the Lord, but only symbols or representatives of it. If this is so, then it follows that these passages concerning baptism also may not really mean what upon their face they seem to mean. In other words, the Bible is not always to be interpreted literally.

This view of the matter is strengthened by the fact that in the larger number of instances baptism is not mentioned in connection with conversion. John 3:15, 18 and 36 says: "Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have eternal life..... he that believeth on him is not condemned..... and he that believeth hath everlasting life." Again, Acts 10:43, "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Paul also says, Rom. 1:16, that the gospel "is the power of God unto

salvation, to every one that believeth." So Peter, 1 Pet. 3:21, affirms that baptism "is not the washing away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God." These and other similar passages predicates remission of sins, or salvation, on believing alone; and, if baptism is a condition, then they mislead those they address, by omitting to state it. We cannot believe this, and so we prefer to believe that they state all that is necessary to salvation, and that those other and less numerous passages are to be interpreted in some other way. We take the greater as against the less.

This view of the matter is farther strengthened by the fact that the other interpretation makes the Bible teach an impossibility. Baptism is a physical act. Regeneration is a spiritual result. Water can wash away physical filth. It cannot wash away spiritual filth. That necessarily requires a spiritual washing. A physical washing may symbolize or represent a spiritual washing, and that is just what baptism does.

But, to make the symbol precede that which it represents, is to make it represent a lie. To represent a spiritual fact that has not yet taken place, and may never take place, is to represent a falsehood, and baptism was never intended to do this. It would make the candidate represent himself a Christian, dead and buried to the world, and resurrected to newness of life, when in fact he is not, and knows he is not, and only hopes to become one, by baptism doing for him what it can no more do for him than can literal fire burn up sin, or a literal fence keep out spiritual devils.

But, this matter is incontestably set at rest by the fact that in all the New Testament baptisms, on and after the setting up of the church at Pentecost, believing, or conversion, was required before baptism.

In the Great Commission, as given by Matthew, 28:19, 20, the Master says:—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them"—clearly showing they were first to be taught and then baptized. Mark's version, 16:16, makes it plainer still—"He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved." The believing is to be the first thing, "and" then they are to be baptized.

The next mention of the subject is at Pentecost. They who were "pricked in their heart," as the first step, asked what farther they should do. Peter answers, Acts 2:38,—"Repent and be baptized." Repent first, "and" be baptized afterward. But repentance implies belief, or faith—no one *can* repent unless he believes—so this includes the "believing" of the Commission. To make the matter plainer still, Luke, Acts 2:44, tells who were actually baptized according to Peter's answer, namely, "They that gladly received the word," that is, "believers," "were baptized"—plainly implying that no others were.

The next mention of the matter is Philip at Samaria, Acts 8:12, where it is said, "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Clearly all these "believed" first, and were baptized afterwards. A little farther on, Acts 8:37, where the eunuch asks baptism, Philip says:—"If thou be-

lievest with all thy heart, thou mayest," clearly implying that if he did not believe, even with all his heart, he should not.

Then comes the case of Paul, evidently a believer before his baptism. The case of Cornelius follows. Peter says, Acts 10:47.—"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Fhost as well as we"—implying that if they had *not* received the Holy Ghost, baptism should have been forbidden. Now these are all the cases recorded for some seven years after the crucifixion. In every one, "believing" was required, and exercised, before baptism. Not a child, who cannot believe, or any other nonbeliever, was baptized, or could have been baptized under any instruction thus far given—only "believers," and of course adult enough to believe.

Now come some cases of household baptism. The first is that of Lydia, Acts 16:15. She "was baptized, and her household." To make this support infant baptism, four things must be assumed, for which there is not the slightest shred of proof:—First, that Lydia was a married woman; second, that she had children; third, that some of her children were infants; and, fourth that they were with her. If any of these unsupported assumptions is not true, this case affords no proof of infant baptism. Baptists are not required to prove there were no infants. It is necessary for pedo baptists to prove there were, before the case can do them any good, They know and admit that they cannot prove any single one of these assumptions.

But let us see what are the facts. First, Lydia is "a seller of purple," on her own account; and so,

according to the custom of that age, she almost certainly could not have been a married woman. Then, she is at Phillippi, while her home is at Thyatira, a long ways distant, so that if she had had any infant children they could hardly have been with her. Finally, as if to make the thing sure, her household, Acts 16:40, are called "brethren," and so could not have contained infants. Not a bit of proof, or argument, or of comfort, in this case, therefore, for believers in infant, or any other, unbelieving baptism, but virtually conclusive proof against it.

The next case, is that of the Phillippian jailor, Acts 16:33. This is soon disposed of, since it is first said, that Paul and Silas "spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." They were therefore all old enough to be intelligently preached to. And then, to clinch the matter, it is added, v. 34, that he believed "in God, *with all his house.*" So, then, beyond question, there were none in his house too young to believe, or who did not believe.

There are two more cases mentioned in Acts. The first is, 18:8, that of Crispus, who "believed on the Lord with all *his* house," also—no infants or nonbelievers there—"and many of the Corinthians having believed, and were baptized"—believing first and baptized afterwards. No nonbelievers there, either. This includes the "household of Stephanus," whom Paul baptized at this time; so they, also, were manifestly all "believers." The case of the Ephesians is equally clear, Acts 19:1-6. They evidently were all adults,—"disciples." Not an infant there.

But this is not all of this case. These disciples had before been baptized "unto John's baptism," which was distinctively "for the remission of sins," and did not involve conversion. They had not "so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," and so, of course, had not been converted by it. It was, in fact, just the baptism, so far as this point is concerned, that some are now so zealously supporting—a baptism before the remission of sins. But Paul explained unto them the way of the Lord more perfectly, declaring that "the baptism of repentance," to which they had submitted, was not sufficient, and then, after leading them properly to "believe," proceeded to rebaptize them. In this, Paul was wrong, if baptism before conversion, and in order to conversion, is the right way, and those are wrong who baptize before conversion, if Paul was right.

This brings the Bible history of baptism down to A. D. 63, and not a case of either infant or nonbelieving baptism. More than this. Facts are stated that render it virtually certain that none such were baptized. Even the household of Stephanus are described, 1 Cor. 26:15, as converts—"first fruits," and as "addicted to the ministry of the saints," and so could not be infants or nonbelievers.

In the epistles, the case is not different. Paul says:—Rom. 6:3-6, "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death .....that like as Christ was raised from the dead, ...even so we also should walk in newness of life .....our old man is crucified with him." Infants and nonbelievers cannot "walk in newness of life," or have the "old man crucified with

him." In Gal. 3:27, he says, "As many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Infants cannot "put on Christ," and nonbelievers will not, so there were no baptized infants or nonbelievers among them. In Col. 2:12, he says, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein (also) ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation (power) of God." Infants and nonbelievers cannot be "risen with him," (in newness of life,) "through faith," and so no such were included by the apostle. Peter says, 1 Pet. 3:21, that baptism is "the answer of a good conscience" —which can be true neither of an infant, nor an unbeliever.

It is not merely noticeable—it is providential—that in connection with all the New Testament cases of baptism, on and after Pentecost and the setting up of the church, the character of all the candidates is so explicitly pointed out as believers, or converted persons. No loop-hole is left for cavil. No ingenuity can get around the stated fact of their having believed before baptism.

The same thing is manifested with equal conclusiveness in the design of baptism. All Baptists agree that baptism is a representative ordinance—designed to represent one's death and burial to the world and resurrection to a new life in Christ Jesus. And pedobaptists, while disallowing the Baptist statement of the matter, still declare it to represent an inward cleansing from sin—the symbol of purification from sin. So far as this point is concerned, therefore, they agree that the design of baptism is representative—to represent the candidate as washed or cleansed from sin. Now, from the nature of

the case, this cannot be true of any nonbeliever. Nor can it be true of the infant, because it has had no sin, from which to be washed or cleased. If, therefore, the candidate has not already had his sins washed away, his baptism represents what has not taken place, and so is a misrepresentation and a lie.

From this brief discussion, several things clearly follow.

1. It follows that, whatever may or may not have been intended by the expressions "be baptized, and wash away thy sins"—"be baptized every one of you for the remission of sin"—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—or "born of the water and of the spirit"—they do not mean that one shall be baptized before he believes with a saving faith—that he shall represent a thing as true which is not true, as existing which does not exist. If those passages mean that men are to be baptized before believing—before their sins are washed away—then the apostles and all the New Testament baptizers were mistaken in requiring such belief before baptism, and the design of baptism is something fundamentally different from what the whole Protestant world believes it to be—for those who preach baptism as a condition of forgiveness still very inconsistently agree with the rest as to the design of baptism.

Having thus shown what those passages cannot mean, we are not called upon to show what they do mean. There are enigmas in the Bible, as well as in nature, which no man has yet completely explained. But it may be suggested whether they are not to be interpreted much as are the passages

—"This is my body" and "This is my blood," which are understood as if reading—"This represents my body," and "This represents my blood." Hence, they would mean—"Arise and be baptized, which represents the washing away of your sins," "Be baptized, to represent the remission of your sins," and "He that believeth, representing it by being baptized, (after the fact, of course,) shall be saved." "Born of water (of life, Rev. 22:17, the "living water" the Master gives, John 4:10,) and of the spirit."

It may be added, that a people having but one point distinguishing them from others, and that point resting upon such a questionable interpretation of three or four practically identical passages, and which we have shown cannot be the true interpretation of them, rests upon an altogether sandy foundation. The Roman Catholics rest their doctrine of transubstantiation upon the two passages, "This is my body," and "This is my blood." But this is not their only distinguishing feature. They have a number of other peculiar doctrines to fall back upon, should they be driven from this, or even should they themselves give it up. But this people have staked their all upon this one shaky interpretation that compels them to do violence to other scriptures, and to the laws of nature as well.

2. There is no Bible authority for an unconverted church-membership. Cases will occasionally occur in which both the church and the candidate mistake, and assume conversion where it does not exist. But care should in all cases be exercised to avoid such mistakes, since the effect on both the candidate and the church may be extremely injurious. There is also a tendency with evangelists

and revivalists to accept insufficient evidence of such radical change of heart and life as should always be insisted on. The desire to count large numbers of converts sometimes overmasters a cool judgment of evidences. While every real convert should by all means, and at once, be led to baptism, and into the church, still there should first be such manifested evidences of conversion, as shall leave no reasonable doubt that it has actually taken place.

4. A state church cannot properly exist. Every citizen is a member of the state. But every citizen is not converted, and fit to be a member of the church. Natural birth is the introduction into the state. Only a subsequent spiritual birth, represented by baptism, can qualify one for introduction into the church.

It follows, farther, that any support of the church by the state is inadmissable, or any civil connection whatever with it. The church should never ask the state for the support, financially or by legislation, of any of its institutions—not even the sabbath. The state may legislate for a day of rest for its own sake—because it is for its own good—but not for the sake of the church. The state may legislate against sins denounced in the Bible for the same reason, but not at the demand of the church, nor for its advantage. The state may suppress roystering conduct at religious services, because it is in the interests of society and the training of good citizens—not to sustain the church. The church, with God on its side, is abundantly able to take care of itself, and will prosper best when it keeps its own matters in its own hands.

Before dismissing this part of the subject, permit a few words on the pernicious practice of infant baptism.

1. It represents what is not true. It is true that sprinkling a few drops of water on a baby's head does not represent much of anything. But even pedobaptists preach baptism as representing some kind of inward experience, that has not taken place, and cannot take place, in the case of a child. Then it puts up a sponsor to promise to do what he cannot do, and so has no right to promise to do. It thus puts forward impossibilities as though they were facts, and so represents as true what is not true, and cannot be true. In plain language it is a falsification on its own face.

2. Then it resorts to the most roundabout, far-fetched and strained interpretations of scripture. It does not bring one single direct, plain statement of the Bible in its behalf, for the very good reason that there is no such statement in the Bible, but goes around the bush, and expends hours about covenants, and baptism in the place of circumcision, about the prophet's "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean," about "Suffer little children to come unto me," and about a hundred and one other things that have nothing whatever to do with sprinkling babies--until no wonder many people say the Bible is a fiddle on which any kind of a tune can be played. It is a great perverter of the Bible.

3. Then it mystifies and bewilders the subjects of it, if they are given to independent thought. They feel that they, themselves, had no part whatever in the matter. They promised nothing. They

did nothing. Nothing affecting their inward life was done to them. And yet, it is pressed upon them that somehow, in some mysterious way, which they cannot perceive, their religious life was affected thereby. And then, they begin to query—"Am I a Christian already? If so, I can't perceive how I came to be one, or what it is to be a Christian. If I am not, and need still to be converted, of what use was that so-called baptism? Was it not, then, a sham and a delusion, representing something that had no real existence, and so was a lie? If I become converted, ought I to be baptized for myself, to represent a real experience in my life; or must I depend on that old performance, that represented nothing in me, and in which I had no other part than to be the involuntary subject of it? How can I solve these questions? How can I get out of this dilemma? Would that my parents had been content to be religious for themselves, and left me to settle by myself, and for myself, the question of my own personal relations to God and eternity!"

4. It is a perverter of Christianity in the sight of the world. Men are sinners. They will perish, unless saved by some wondrous transformation. But pedobaptists come along with a gospel preaching impossibilities and acting shams, and occupying themselves with twisting texts to prove some good from an outward action, in which the recipient took no voluntary part, and could take none, and trying to palm this off as a sample of Christianity. Every thoughtful person will say—"If that is a fair sample of your Christianity, it can do me no good; it cannot cleanse me from sin; it cannot

lift me up to a higher life; it is only a sort of rag baby for children; seeming to be something when there is no life nor power in it!"

III.—MODE OF BAPTISM.

It is conceded at the outset that the mode of baptism does not concern its most vital features. It is a form, a method, of bringing out what is far more important than itself. It is the external, representing the internal—the outward language, uttering the fact of an inward experience. The fact is certainly more important than the language expressing it—the internal experience is more vital than the garb it wears.

But, for all this, it does not follow that the outward expression is of little importance. The language needs to be the fitting outspeaking of the thing, that it do not distort and misrepresent it. The outward needs to be a truthful and expressive representation of the vital experience. Even the very character of the internal depends upon its fitting embodiment in the external. Langnage sometimes conceals thought, instead of expressing it. Incompetent expression often perverts fact. A distorted medfum distorts the image that is seen through it. And so, the perversion of the mode of baptism perverts the conception of baptism itself—distorting the medium through which it is seen, it gives us only a distorted view of the inward fact it professes to represent.

The matter becomes still more serious when the Master himself has indicated the outward as well as the inward—when he has specifically told us

how to represent the vital significance of the life he has generated within us. Who are we, practically to assume that we are wiser than he—to say, "Not so, Lord! Our way is better than thine." It not only assumes superior wisdom on our part, but it puts us into the position of rebellion. He has said one thing. We say another. He has laid down one way. We follow another. He has made one law. We break it, and make another. He tells us to do a thing in one way. We do it in another.

There are four distinct and rather widely separate lines of argument, that converge to one point, in settling the mode of baptism. They are, the common sense argument, the philological argument, the historical argument, and the biblical argument.

1.—The Common Sense Argument.

If one is traveling in the country, and finds two roads, one of which certainly leads to the place he wishes to reach, and it is questionable whether the other goes there at all, would any common sense man take the questionable road? Will anybody take a coin that half the experts declare to be counterfeit, instead of one they all pronounce genuine? If you were buying a farm, and found two, otherwise desirable and alike, but one with an unquestionable title and the other with a serious cloud upon it—which would you take? Is there a sane man anywhere who would take the clouded title in preference to the unclouded one? Certainly not. If you were seeking security for a sum of

money, and one is offered concerning which there is no dispute, and another that is seriously disputed, is there any man in his senses who would pass by the undisputed security and take the disputed one? Of course not.

The dictate of common sense everywhere is to run no unnecessary risks. Always take the safe road, in preference to the unsafe one. Never take a risk, when you can easily avoid it. Make everything sure, where the means of doing so are at hand. If you perceive one thing to be clearly right, and a proposed substitute to be clouded in doubt, it doesn't take common sense long to decide between them. If by doing one thing you are safe, and by doing another you are unsafe, it certainly is not safe to do the unsafe thing.

Now, by universal consent, immersion is a valid form or mode of baptism. There is no question about that. It is the safe road, the undisputed coin, the unquestionable title, the undoubted security. The whole Christian world accepts it as genuine. Catholic and Protestant, and denominations of all shades of opinion, unite at least in this one thing of admitting that immersion is a valid form or mode of baptism. If one is immersed, therefore, there is no question as to the mode of his baptism. That is then placed beyond any dispute. He need have, and can have, no question about it. It is a settled thing, concerning which he can have no after misgivings.

This is a proud position that the Baptists occupy. Whatsoever things are unstable, their foundation in this standeth sure. They can meet all their fellows, and say—"Even you, yourselves, ad-

mit we are beyond all question right." Their mode of baptism stands all the tests, and is disputed by no one. They can go up to the Judgment with no fear of being condemned in this matter.

On the other hand, how is it with other modes? They are all questioned, and so are certainly questionable. One half the Christian world, more or less, including the Greek church, including also men of the greatest ability, the most eminent piety, the most profound scholarship, and the most thorough research, unite in declaring that sprinkling and other similar modes are not baptism at all, so that one who has not been immersed has not been baptized at all. Any of them is the questionable road, the insufficient security, the coin that half the experts pronounce spurious, the farm with a clouded title—such as men of ordinary sagacity and common sense would not accept in ordinary transactions—certainly not when they could equally as well have an unquestioned title.

Common sense, therefore, stands as much against pedobaptism as it does in favor of immersion; and, if Christians were guided as much by it in religious matters as they are in secular, pedobaptism and sprinkling would speedily disappear. In secular matters, men exercise the keenest practical sense, and then turn right about and act like children in religious matters—accepting conclusions concerning them that they would not tolerate for a moment in their business affairs.

A word as to what those should do, who have unfortunately been sprinkled in infancy, before conversion. Your baptism, as we have seen, is in question. It is even a question whether you have

been baptized at all. If you already have a farm in hand with a clouded title, and found a ready means of clearing that title, what would you do? Where is the man that would hesitate, or wait? Would not any one hasten with all possible dispatch to clear that title? Now, such an one can clear his title to baptism, by simply being immersed after conversion. Should he not do it? If he does not do it, he must either go through life thoughtless and indifferent as to whether he has really obeyed the Master, as most pedobaptists probably do—perhaps to meet a great surprise at the Judgment—or else he will be constantly harrassed with perplexity and doubt as to whether he has kept the Lord's commandment. We submit that it is better to settle all this doubt, when it can so easily be done.

It is not at all a question of rebaptism. It is simply making it sure that you have been baptized.

2.—*The Philological Argument.*

Baptize and baptism are the English form of two Greek words that have been transferred to our English Bible without translation, thus compelling us to hunt out the meaning in the Greek, in order to understand them. *Why?*—may perhaps be answered by the fact that the translators were pedobaptists. For, had their meaning been in harmony with the practice of the translators, they would no doubt have translated them, instead of covering up their meaning by transferring. The result, however, has been a very thorough investigation of these words, from all points of view, until perhaps about all has been learned about them that can be. For-

tunately, a very general unanimity has been reached by all the authorities in Greek.

Concerning *Baptizo*, the important word, that carries the meaning of the other with it, the following facts are well established, namely—

1. Its first-given and principal meaning is immersion, or some equivalent for it, as is declared by all accredited lexicons.

Among such, are the following:

LIDDELL AND SCOTT.—"Baptizo. To dip under water, (and Baptismos, a dipping in water.")

DONNEGAN.—"Baptizo. To immerse repeatedly in a liquid; to submerge. Baptismos: Immersion; submersion."

GROVE. — "Baptizo. To dip, immerse, immerge, plunge."

ROBINSON.—"Baptizo. A frequentative in form but not in fact; to immerse, to sink."

PARKHURST.—"Baptizo. To dip, immerse, or plunge in water."

STEPHANUS.—"Baptizo. To immerse, or immerge."

SCHLEUSNER.—"Baptizo. Properly, to immerge and dip in, to immerse into water."

SCHREVELIUS.—"Baptizo. To baptize, immerse, wash off."

SCAPULA.—"Baptizo. To immerse, or immerge."

SUIDAS.—"Baptizo. To immerse, to immerge, to dip."

STOCKIUS.—"Baptizo. Generally, and by the force of the word, it has the idea of dipping in and immersing."

WRIGHT.—"Baptizo. I dip, immerse, plunge."

LEIGH.—"Baptizo. The native and proper signification of it is, to dip into water, or to plunge under water."

GREENFIELD, W.—"Baptizo. To immerse, immerge, submerge, sink."

SCHOTTGEN. — "Baptizo, from Bapto; properly to plunge, to immerse, or plunge into water."

BASS.—"Baptizo. To dip, immerse, plunge in water."

SCHWARZIUS.—"Baptizo. To baptize, to immerse, to overwhelm, to dip into."

HEDERIC.—"Baptizo. To immerse, immerge, overwhelm with water."

STEPHANUS.—"Baptizo. To immerse or immerge, as things which we immerse in water for the sake of dyeing or washing clean."

EWING.—"Its primary signification, I cover with water, or some other fluid. I plunge into, or sink completly under water."

SCAPULA.—"Baptizo. To immerse, or submerge."

DUNBAR.—"Baptizo. To dip, immerse, submerge, plunge, sink."

MOREL.—"Baptizo. To immerse, to immerge, to overwhelm in water."

LAINY. –"Baptizo. To baptize, to plunge in water."

JONES.—"Baptizo. I plunge, plunge in water, dip."

STOCKIUS.—"Baptizo. Generally, and by the force of the word, it has the idea of dipping in and immersing. With special propriety it is to immerse or dip in the water."

SUICER.– "Baptisma or baptismos properly denotes immersion, or dipping into."

MINTERT.—"Baptizo. To baptize; properly, indeed, it signifies to plunge, to immerse, to dip in water."

PASOR.—"Baptizo. To immerse, to wash clean."

ALSTEDIUS.—"Baptizien signifies only to immerse; not to wash, except by consequence."

BRETSCHNEIDER.—"In baptizo is contained the idea of a complete immersion under water. An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism."

THAYER. J. H.—"Baptizo. To dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge."

SOPHOCLES, E. A.—"Baptizo. To dip, to immerse, to sink."

ANTHON.—"The primary meaning of the word, (Baptizo) is to dip or immerse, and its secondary meanings, if it have any, all refer, in some way or other, to the same leading idea. Sprinkling, etc., are entirely out of the question."—Letter to Dr. Ball.

To these might be added many more. But, since without exception they are all alike on this point, there is no need of it.*

Now add to this the universally admitted rule of interpretation that "A word is to be understood in its literal and primary meaning, unless there is something in the context or the circumstances that prohibit it," and the Philological Argument gives the case to the Baptists—since there is no case in the Bible, concerning baptism, where either the context or the circumstances forbids *Baptizo* to be understood as immerse, or *Baptismos* as immersion. Yet—

2. All cases of secondary or figurative use of *Baptizo*, (or *Baptismos*,) derive their special force and beauty from an underlying idea of immersion.

3. While there are various other Greek words to express various other applications of water, such as *rantizo* to sprinkle, *louo* and *ablouo* to wash, *cheo* and *ekcheo* to pour, etc., the Bible, while using them in other connections, never once uses any of

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* Some pedobaptist debaters have brought forward certain remote and figurative meanings, and presented them as if they were the primary and literal ones, or at least of equal significance, whereas no lexicon has been produced that justifies any such pretensions, or gives the first and leading definitions different from the above. It is simply a case of ignorance, or a misleading game of bluff.

them in connection with baptism. Can anybody tell why, if their meanings, or any of them, were applicable to it? If baptism might be by pouring, why was not *cheo* or *ekcheo* at least occassionally used? If it might be by sprinkling, why was *rantizo* never used?

4. Baptizo is the strongest word there is in the Greek language to express immersion, and does express it as strongly as immerse* does in English. How does it happen that this word is invariably used concerning baptism, instead of any of the others, unless the sacred writers meant immersion and immersion only? Can anybody tell? Does it not look wondrously as though those sacred writers were baptists, writing precisely as baptists would now write, if they were to write in Greek?

These testimonies as to the ancient meaning of baptizo may properly be followed by some account of how it was translated into other languages in the ancient versions. Dr. F. W. Gotch, who is a generally accepted authority, says:—

"With regard to the ancient versions, in all of them, with three exceptions, (namely, the Latin from the third century, and the Sahidic and Basmuric,) the word baptizo is translated by words purely native; and the three excepted versions adopted the Greek word, not by way of transference, but in consequence of the term having become current in the languages. Of native words employed, the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, and earliest Latin, all signify to immerse; the Anglo Saxon, both to *immerse* and to *cleanse;* the Persic, to *wash;* and the Sclavonic, to *cross.* The meaning of the word adopted from the Greek, in Sahidic, Basmuric, and Latin, being also to immerse."—From Ingham p. 72.

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* WEBSTER'S INTERNATIONAL.—"Immerse. 1. To plunge into anything that surrounds or covers, especially into a fluid; to dip; to sink; to bury; to immerge. 2. To baptize by immersion. 3. To engage deeply; to engross the attention of; to involve; to overwhelm. ..... Immersed in the enjoyments of life.—Atterbury."

Concerning later versions, he says:—

"With regard to the modern versions examined, the Eastern generally adhere to the ancient Eastern versions, and translated by words signifying *to immerse*. Most of the Gothic dialects, namely, the German, Swedish, Dutch, Danish, etc., employ altered forms of the Gothic word signifying to *dip*. The Icelandic use a word meaning *cleanse*. The Slavic dialects follow the ancient Sclavonic; and the languages formed from the Latin, including the English, adopt the word *baptizo;* though, with respect to the English, the words *wash* and *christen* were formerally used, as well as baptize."—Ingham p. 72.

At first, it seems strange that the Sclavonic, including Russia, where nearly all belong to the Greek church, which practices immersion, should use *to cross*. The explanation is that at baptism they cross themselves. This crossing does not take the place of immersion, as sprinkling does, for they also immerse. But the name seems to be applied to the whole ceremony, somewhat as *christen* is sometimes in England and in this country.

These versions are strikingly significant of the late appearance of the practice of sprinkling. It gains no support from any one of them. Indeed, the word *sprinkle*, or any synonym for it, does not appear in any translation whatever of the Bible —unless it is in some very modern pedobaptist missionary version.

3.—The Historical Argument.

We now proceed from the meaning of the word to the practice of the church. Words are important witnesses, and give their testimony in a very direct and significant way. They have no temptation to prevaricate, and could not do it if they would. Having shown what the word means, we

now show what the church, at the time the word was given, and immediately after, understood it to mean. If it understood it to mean what it really did mean, and practiced accordingly, there is an end to controversy. The point must be conceded.

Happily, there is no fact in equally ancient history more fully attested and established than that immersion was the mode of baptism in the primitive church. There is no prominent church historian that denies it, or that does not admit it, and the scholars of the church, ancient and modern, are equally unanimous and emphatic on this subject. We begin with quotations from some of the

Historians.

FISHER, of Yale.—'Baptism, it is now generally agreed among scholars, was commonly by immersion."—Beginning of Christ., p 565. Again, also of the first century, "The ordinary mode of baptism was by immersion."—Ch. Hist. p. 41.

SCHAFF.—"Respecting the form of baptism, therefore, ...the impartial historian is compelled by exegesis and history substa tially to yield the point to the Baptists, as is done in fact.....by most German scholars.—History of the Church, Vol. 1. p. 570.

GUERICKE.—"Baptism was originally performed by immersion, in the name of the Trinity."—Ch, Hist. p. 141.

KURTZ.—"Baptism took place by complete immersion."—Ch. Hist. p. 41.

MOSHEIM.—"Baptism was administered in convenient places, without the assemblies, and by immersing the candidates wholly in water."—Ch. Hist. Cent. 1; Part II.; chap, 4.

STANLEY.—"In that early age, the scene of the transaction was either a deep wayside spring or well, as for the Ethiopian, or some rushing river, as the Jordan, or some vast reservoir, as at Jericho or Jerusalem, whither, as in the baths of Caracalla at Rome, the whole pop-

ulation resorted for swimming or washing."—Christ. Inst., p. 2.

RHEINWALD.—"Immersion was the original apostolic practice."—Archeology, p. 333.

KRAUS.—"Baptism was performed by immersion, in the name of the Trinity."—Ch. Hist. p. 56.

PRESSENE.—"Baptism.....was administered by immersion."—Early years of Christ. p. 374.

BUNSEN.—"In the east, people adhered to immersion. The western church, under the guidance of Rome, abolished immersion, and introduced sprinkling in its stead."—Signs of the Times.

VENEMA.—"It is without controversy, that baptism in the primitive church was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling."—Hist. Eccle.

MOSES STUART, of Andover.—Says of baptizo that it means "to dip, plunge or immerge into anything liquid. All lexicographers and critics, of any note, are agreed in this."—Bib. Rep. Apr. 1833, p. 298.

NEANDER.—"Baptism was originally administered by immersion; and many of the companions of Saint Paul allude to this form of its administration; the immersion is a symbol of death, of being buried with Christ; the coming forth from the water is a symbol of resurrection with Christ; and both taken together represent the second birth, the death of the old man, and the resurrection to a new life."—Ch. Hist. vol. 1, p. 429. In a letter to Mr. Judd, he says:—"As to your question on the original rite of baptism, there can be no doubt whatever that in the primitive times it was performed by immersion, to signify a complete immersion into the new principle of the Divine life which was to be imparted by the Messiah."—In Judd's reply to Stuart, p. 194.

COLEMAN.—"Immersion, or dipping. In the primitive church, this was undoubtedly the common mode of baptism.....It is a great mistake to suppose that baptism by immersion was discontinued when infant baptism became prevalent. This was as early as the sixth century; but the practice of immersion continued until the thirteenth or fourteenth century."—Christian Antiquities, p. 122.

DR. WALL, (a pedobaptist,)—"Their (the primitive

Christians) general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person.....This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of such pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it.....It is a great want of prudence, as well as of honesty, to refuse to grant to an adversary what is certainly true, and may be proved so."—Def. of Hist., p. 403.

CONYBEARE AND HOWSON.—"It is needless to add that baptism was, (unless in exceptional cases.) administered by immersion, the convert being plunged beneath the surface of the water, to represent his death to the life of sin, and then raised from this momentary burial, to represent his resurrection to the life of righteousness. It must be a subject of regret that the general discontinuance of this original form of baptism..... ..has rendered obscure to popular apprehension some very important passages of scripture."—Life and Epis. of Paul, vol. 1, c. 13.

EDIN. ENCY.—"In the time of the apostle, the form of baptism was very simple. The person to be baptized was dipped in a river or vessel, with the words that Christ had ordered.....It was not till 1311, that the legislature, in a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent. In this country (Scotland), however, sprinkling was never practiced in ordinary cases before the Reformation. From Scotland it made its way into England, in the reign of Elizabeth, but was not authorized by the Established church. In the Assembly of Divines, held at Westminister, in 1643, (that originated the Westminister and Philadelphia Confessions,) it was keenly debated whether immerson or sprinkling should be adopted; twenty-five voted for sprinkling, and twenty-four for immersion; and even that small majority was obtained at the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in the Assembly."—Art. Baptism.

Scholars.

HARNACK. "1. Baptism undoubtedly signifies immersion; 2. No proof can be found that it means anything else in the New Testament, and in the most ancient Christian writings; 3. There is no reason for supposing that any New Testament author understood it to mean anything else. 4. There is no certain proof

that pouring or sprinkling was practiced in the second century. N. Y. Independent, Feb. 19, 1885.

PROF. PAINE, L. L., of Bangor Theological Seminary, says of immersion as the ancient practice, "The testimony is ample and decisive. No matter of church history is clearer. The evidence is all one way, and all church historians of any repute agree in accepting it. We cannot claim even originality in teaching it in a Congregational seminary.....It is a point on which ancient, medieval, and modern historians alike, Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran and Calvinistic, have no controversy. And the simple reason for this unanimity is that the statements of the fathers are so clear, and the light shed upon these statements from the early customs of the church is so conclusive, that no historian who cares for his reputation would dare to deny it, and no historian who is worthy of the name would wish to." (No Baptist could use stronger language than this.)

SCHMUCKER, S. S.—"It is to certainly to be lamented that Luther was not able to accomplish with regard to the translation of immersion in baptism, as he had done in the restoration of wine in the Encharist. Luther and some late theologians have thought that the aspersion destroys the force of some passages of the New Testament."—Bib. Theol., vol. II, p. 321.

DEAN STANLEY.—"For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that..... which is the very meaning of the word 'baptizo'—that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed, in water.....All who profess to go by the opinion of the ancients and the teaching of Augustine, must be prepared to believe that immersion is essential to the efficacy of baptism." The change to sprinkling, he says, "is a greater change even than that which the Roman Catholic church has made in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the bread without the wine. For that was a change which did not affect the thing that was signified; whereas the change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the larger part of the apostolic language regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word."

LANGE.—"Baptism in the apostolic age was a proper baptism, the immersion of the body in water."—Infant Baptism, p. 50.

ARCHBP. TILLOTSON.—"Anciently, those who were

baptized.....were immersed and buried in the water."—Works, vol. 1, Sec. VII.

Dr. S. Clarke.—"In the primitive times, the manner of baptizing was by immersion."

Bp. Nicholson.—"The sacrament of baptism was anciently administered by plunging into the water." Camden's Brittanica, p. 841.

Bp. Burnet.—"We know that the first ritual of baptism was by going into the waters, and being laid as dead backward all along in them, and the persons baptized were raised up again, and so they came out of them."

Bp. Taylor.—"The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion." Ductor Dub. p. 644.

Baxter.—"We grant that baptism then (in the primitive times) was by washing the whole body."—Para, on N. T., at Mat. 3:6.

Dr. Doddridge.—"The most considerable argument in favor of immersion is that it was practiced in the primitive ages."—Lecturer.

Wesley.—"Mary Welsh.....was baptized, according to the custom of the first church.....by immersion."—Journal, p. 11, first ed.

Bp. Heber, in Life of Jeremy Taylor. "He evidently regretted, as Wesley afterwards did, the discontinuance of the practice of immersion."

Augusti.—"It is a thing made out, namely the ancient practice of immersion. I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out. I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject to deny this." Quoted by Moses Stuart, on Bap., p. 359.

Luther wrote to the Wittenburg divines "That this sprinkling was an abuse that ought to be corrected."—Dr. Du Veil, on Acts.

Calvin.—"The very word baptize, however, signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church."—Inst. C. XV., p. 343.

LINGARD.—"The sacrament of baptism was in the first institution conferred by immersion."—Theol.

WINER.—"In the apostolic age, baptism was by immersion." Lect. on Archeol.

BRETSCHNEIDER.—"The apostolic church baptized only by immersion."—Theol vol. 1, p. 684.

MOSES STUART.—"We have collected facts enough to authorize us now to come to the following general conclusion respecting the practice of the Christian church in general with regard to the mode of baptism, viz., that from the earliest ages.....and downward for several centuries, the churches did generally practice baptism by immersion." On Bapt.

SALMASIUS.—"Baptism is immersion, and was administered in ancient times according to the force and meaning of the word. Now it is only rantism or sprinkling." De Cæs. Virorum, p. 669.

HOORNBECK.—"We not deny that the word bears the sense of immersion, or that, in the first examples of persons baptized, they went into the water and were immersed." Socin. Confut. vol. 11, p. 268.

KECKERMAN.—"We cannot deny that the first institution of baptism consisted of immersion and not sprinkling." Syst. Theol., vol. 111, p. 369.

CLEMENT. (Swiss,)—"Luther and Calvin give the preference to immersion, and it is certain that as a symbol this form addresses the senses in a manner much more striking than sprinkling does... ..It is beyond doubt that immersion was the primitive and ordinary form of baptism." Sur le Bapteme, pp. 220, 222.

VAN OSTERZEE.—"This sprinkling, which appears to have first come generally into use in the thirteenth century, in place of the entire immersion of the body..... has certainly the imperfection that the symbolical character of the act is expressed by it much less conspicuously than by complete immersion and burial under water." Christian Dogmatics, p. 749. "History teaches that baptism.....degenerated from the primitive simplicity. It was originally administered by immersion." Pract. Theol., p. 419.

CUNNINGHAM, (Scotch.)—"Baptism means immersion,

at it was immersion.....Nothing could have been simpler than baptism in its first form. When a convert declared his faith in Christ, he was taken to the nearest pool or stream of water and plunged into it, and henceforward he was recognized as one of the Christian community." Growth of the Ch., p. 173.

JACOBS, (Epis.)—"It only remains to be observed that baptism in the primitive church was evidently administered by immersion."—Polity of N. T., p. 258.

CAMPBELL, Geo.—"The word baptizo both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse."

ROSENMULLER.—"Baptizo is to dip; the body or part of the body going under the water is said to be baptized."

BAXTER.—"It is commonly confessed by us to the Anabaptists, as our commentators declare, that in the apostles' times they baptized over head in the water, and that this signified their profession, both of believing the burial, and resurrection of Christ: and of their own *present* renouncing the world and flesh, or dying to sin and living to Christ, or rising again to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the apostle expoundeth in the forecited texts of Col. and Rom.—Plain Scrip. Proof, p. 134.

WHITBY.—"It being so expressly declared here, and Col. 2:12, that we are *buried with Christ in baptism* by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence; and the immersion being religiously observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries, and approved by our (English) church, and the change of it into sprinkling even without any allowance from the author of this institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urges to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity; it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use." Commentary on Rom. 6:4.

*Early Christian Fathers.**

BARNABAS, (a companion of Paul.)—"We go down in-

* Some writers, with reason, make a distinction between the Apostolic Fathers, as those who belonged to the first century, and were contemporary with the apostles, or virtually so—Barnabas, Hermas, Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp—and the Fathers of the Church; those who belonged to a later date. But, for convenience, we classify them all as early Fathers.

to the water full of sins and pollution; but come up again bringing forth fruit." Epist. § 11.

HERMAS, (the Shepherd.)—"The water (of baptism.) into which men go down bound to death, but come up appointed unto life." Pastor, Simil. IX, § 16.

"TWELVE APOSTLES."—"And touching baptism, thus baptize; having first declared all these things, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water. But if thou have not living water, baptize in other water, and, if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But, if thou have neither, pour on the head water thrice in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit."—Teaching, Sect 7.

JUSTIN MARTYR.—"We represent our Lord's sufferings and resurrection by baptism in a pool."—Quest 13, 7.

APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS.—"Baptism relates to the death of Christ; the water answers to the grave; the immersion represents our dying to him; the emersion our rising with him."—Lib. 3, chap. 17.

TERTULLIAN.—"We are immersed in water; let down into the water and dipped. Peter immersed in the Tiber. It is indifferent whether one is baptized in the sea or in a pool, in a river or fountain, in a lake or the bed of a river."—De Bapt., Latin.

CYRIL.—"He who is immersed in water and baptized is surrounded with water on all sides." So are we who are baptized by the Spirit.—Cat. 17. "As in the night, so in immersion, as if it were night, you can see nothing."—Cat. 2.

GREGORY NYSSEN.—"Coming to the water, we conceal ourselves in it, as the Savior concealed himself in the earth."—Bap. of Christ.

CHRYSOSTOM.—"On the great sabbath of the Easter festival, the 16th of April 404, Chrysostom with the assistance of the clergy of his own church, baptized by immersion in Constantinople about three thousand catechumen."—Ad. Innocent, vol. 3, p. 518.

DIONYSIUS.—"The total concealment in water fitly represents Christ's death and burial."—De Eccl. Hierarchia, 2.

AMBROSE.—"Thou saidst, I do believe, and wast im-

mersed; that is thou wast buried."—In Wallace, p. 12.

BASIL.—"How can we be placed in a condition of likeness to his death? By being buried with him in baptism. How are we to go down with him into the grave? By imitating the burial of Christ in baptism; for the bodies of the baptized are in a sense buried in water."—In Rob. Hist. of Baptism, p. 65.

THEOPHILUS, A. D. 180.—"As we are by baptism buried in water, so Christ was buried in the earth."—In Wallace, on Bap. 12.

CLEMENT, A. D. 194.—"A Christian is one who knows God, who believes in Christ, who possesses the grace of God, and who has been dipped in the sacred laver."—Eusebius, b. 4, chap. 62.

APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS, second or third century.—"Baptism was given to represent the death of Christ, the water his burial."—Lib. 3, c. 17.

HIPPOLYTUS, A. D. 230.—"After the declaration of the catechuman, he was immersed into water, in the name of the Father (God), the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Spirit, the Life giver of the church."—Quoted by Bunsen.

CHRYSOSTOM, A. D. 398.—"To be baptized and sunk, and then to arise out of it again, is a symbol of our descent into the grave, and of our ascent from thence: and, therefore, Paul calls baptism a burial."—Hom. 40. "Our first man is buried; he is buried not in earth, but in water.—On Col. 2; 12

These authorities are too numerous to be disregarded, of too high standing in the literary and Christian world to be disputed, and their testimonies too significant to be mistaken—especially, as on the points concerning which they testify, there is no accepted authority that testifies to the contrary. Immerse *is* the first and principle meaning of *baptizo*, and immersion is the first and principle meaning of *baptismos*. These two things, no authority ventures to question. So much is certainly settled. And these conclusions are emphasized by

the fact that all these authorities are pedobaptists, testifying against themselves—except the early Fathers. Not a Baptist among them.

It is not claimed that these words do not have secondary or figurative meanings that lack somewhat of the clear-cut and definite significance of the first and important meaning. That is true of all words. It is true of immerse itself. Webster gives as a remote meaning, a third one, "To engage deeply, to engross the attention of, to involve, to overwhelm," and quotes Atterbury as to being "deeply immersed in the enjoyments of life."

But, there are two significant things connected with this matter. The first is that *baptizo* and *baptisimos*, though subjected to the severest scrutiny, present few cases of secondary or remote meanings, as few as almost any word that can be named—quite as few as immerse itself—so that Prof. Anthon, the distinguished Greek scholar, as we have seen,* seems to question whether it have any.

The second significant fact is that there is no New Testament example of its use, where it may not mean immersion. There is not a single case where if immerse were substituted in its place any violence would be done to the context or the attending circumstances. More than that. Immerse would give the most natural and easy sense, not only of the word, but of the context and circumstances. But, try sprinkling—for instance, in Rom. 6:3, 4,—"Know ye not that so many of us as were sprinkled into Jesus Christ, were sprinkled into his death. Therefore, we are buried with him by sprinkling into death." It would be hard to find a

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Bible revision committee, that would venture on such a translation.

Now, then, recall the everywhere acknowledged principle of interpretation, that a word is always to be given its principal meaning, unless there is something in the context or attendant circumstances that forbids it, and see where you are. You are inevitably forced to be a Baptist. The thing is too plain to be denied—the principal meaning of *baptizo* is immerse—there is no New Testament case of its use, where either context or circumstances require any other meaning—and, to cap the climax, it is beyond question that the primitive Christian church so understood it, and practiced accordingly.

These things being indisputably so, it is curious to observe how pedobaptists manage to hold on to their *rantism.*

"No Importance."

The first thing, like a drowning man catching at a straw, is to proclaim that the mode of baptism is a matter of no importance—that, as you may sit, or recline, or kneel, at the Communion, so you may be rantized (sprinkled,) or poured, or immersed, according to your fancy. To be sure, this entirely overlooks the fact that the Lord settled the mode in the one case, and did not in the other—entirely overlooks the fact that he has interwoven the mode in this one case with the most important facts of Christian experience, (death to sin and resurrection to a new life,) and has done nothing of the kind in the other—entirely overlooks the fact that the Lord, and not we, is the

party to settle the matter of what is important—entirely overlooks the fact that, by commanding us to be baptized and not rantized, he has settled the matter that it *is* important for us to be baptized and not rantized — is important for us to do what he tells us to do, and not to do something else. The clear statement of this matter makes most men hesitate thus to dictate to the Lord, as to what is important and what is unimportant, and virtually to tell him that he ought to have done something else, instead of what he actually has done.

Those clinging to this idea get some comfort from the fact that pouring, (affusion) and eventually sprinkling, began to be occasionally used not so very long after the establishment of the church, as substitutes in exceptional cases. The first was in the case of the sick, (clinics,) who, it was thought, could not be immersed. It was not proposed as a legitimate form of baptism, but as coming as near to the real form as they could, under the circumstances. So, at first, they poured out, (effundere,) the water all over them, in their beds. Then gradually, but not until several centuries, the amount of water grew less until sprinkling grew up, and still later the assumption was made that if sprinkling or pouring would do for the sick, it was a matter of little importance and would do for the well also—and so God's word was frittered away for man's supposed convenience. When men look this matter squarely and candidly in the face, they perceive in it no reason to change God's ordinance, nor to deem it of little importance. In fact, those re-

sorting to these expedients at first did it because they thought it of so much importance, that where they could not have the thing itself, they would resort to the best substitute for it that they could think of. But, we are not after substitutes, but the genuine article.

"*Consciousness of Liberty.*"

Then another excuse is, in the language of Dr. Smyth, of Andover, that "The church has a consciousness of liberty as to baptism." This language is indefinite, as language is liable to be that is framed to get one out of a difficulty. I have a consciousness of *power* to do one or another of various things set before me. But I have no consciousness of any *right* to do either one or the other of two different things. One or the other of them is right and the other is wrong. I have no right to do a wrong thing, and so I can have no consciousness of any such right—nor can the Christian church—in fact, the church, as such, has no consciousness of anything; that belongs only to individuals.

But the Prof. is not only seriously at fault as to his pscyhology, but, if his language means anything significant in the premises, he is equally at fault as to his theology. His language either means that the church is at "liberty" to change the mode of baptism, or it means nothing significant to his purpose. But he is a protestant, and protestants stoutly resist the Roman catholic doctrine that the church has a right to change God's ordinances—that the Pope is God's Vicegerant.

If this is his meaning, as it seems evident it is, then he has abandoned the protestant dsctrine, and embraced the papal; and he is to be answered as we anewer the Roman catholics—If the church may change one thing, it may change another, and where is the end? God is dethroned, and a papacy set up in his place. We do not want any protestant papacy. We want no human tinkering with God's law. We cannot accept any such human right to change what God has ordained. Our business is to find out what God has established, and then follow it, humbly and faithfully. We have no fear of its misleading us.

4. The Bible Argument.

Having proved two things beyond a reasonable question—that immerse is the English synonym of *baptizo*, and that the primitive church understood *baptizo* in that sense—it follows that since the New Testament uses that word for baptism, it means that baptism is by immersion.

This conclusion is intensified by the fact that it never uses any other word for baptism. There was *rantizo*, to sprinkle; and, if the mode was immaterial, it is unaccountable that the sacred writers never use it a single time concerning baptism. If sprinkle was in their minds as a form of baptism, they could not have avoided at least its occasional use. They were familiar with the word, for they frequently use it in other connections. But evidently it did not express their idea of the form of baptism. If pour was a legitimate form of baptism, there was *cheo* or *ekcheo*, at hand, and they

were familiar with them also, but they carefully abstained from using either of them concerning baptism. Evidently, they did not answer their purpose. Pouring did not enter into their conception of the mode of baptism, more than did sprinkling.

And then the fact, already also proved, that the early church, including companions of apostles, understood *baptizo* and *baptismos* as meaning immerse and immersion, and practiced accordingly, is a very conclusive proof that such is the New Testament meaning of those terms. Barnabas, a companion of St. Paul, could not have been mistaken as to what was the understanding and practice of the writers in the New Testament. Nor were others capable of falsifying as to what that understanding and practice was. So, then, these considerations are conclusive as to what the Bible teaches concerning baptism.

All then that we really have to do is to open the Bible and read, reminding the hearer that immerse is the English synonym of *baptizo* and immersion the synonym of *baptismos*, or else ourselves make the substitution of the proper translation as we read. It is only a question of translating; for, if the pedobaptists themselves were to translate the words, even they would not dare to translate them by any other words than immerse and immersion. But without translation the words are meaningless to English ears. In fact, they tell us they have no specific meaning—that they mean either one of several different things. Sometimes they tell us "any form of applying water will do," while, except for the context, it could not be told whether the immersion is in "water," or something else. Instead

of "any form of applying water," it is immersing in what the context or circumstances tell us is water.

We emphasize this point, because what we have already proved settles the matter as to what is the Bible argument. After admitting the philological and historical arguments, as all authorities have to admit, and do admit, there is no question left as to what the Bible means concerning the mode of this ordinance. In saying, as the catholics do, that the church has authority to change the ordinance, there is a virtual admission that the present form in use is a change from the original Bible form. Saying, as some of the pedobaptists do, that the church has "a consciousness of liberty as to baptism," is equally a virtual admission that the original Bible form has been changed. In the saying, as others do, that the form is a matter of no importance, is also a virtual admission that they are not keeping up the primitive Bible form. They all thus practically concede the question.

But, fortunately, the Bible has not left the question alone to the meaning of words, nor even to the understanding of them by the primitive church. It has also done these two very significant things—First, It mentions such attendant circumstances as show what the mode was; and, Second, It so interlinks the mode with acknowledged Christian doctrines that there can be no mistaking of it.

John commenced his ministry, baptizing "in Jordan," and afterwards "in Enon, near Salim, because there was much water there." The obvious reason of selecting these places for baptizing was because of an abundance of water—necessary for

immersion, but not at all important for sprinkling. It used to be said that the Jordan was nearly or quite dry at certain portions of the year, and so could not then furnish water enough for immersion. But, if that was the case, where is the evidence that John baptized in those dry times? And, even then, there must have been deep places, containing water enough for immersion. There always are in such cases. But recent travelers, including Talmage, testify to such abundance of water at all times in the Jordan, as to make the argument appear to be the exceedingly weak one that it was. We probably shall hear no more of it.

Then it is said that the "much water," *hudata polla*, may be translated many waters. That is true. But, where there are many waters, a Baptist will have no difficulty in finding a convenient opportunity for immersing. Indeed, much water and many waters do not differ enough to make many words concerning them necessary. Either of them convey the idea of abundance—an abundance ample for all the needs of immersion. Still, it is probable that much water is the better translation—most accordant with the circumstances.

The baptism of the eunuch also implies the presence of more water than is needed for sprinkling. Philip and the eunuch came to "a certain water." implying a considerable body of it. The eunuch asks baptism. If sprinkling had been the mode, he would have sent his servant for a cupful. Instead of that, they left the chariot in the hands of the servant, and both went down into the water, and, after Philip had baptized him, they came again up out of the water. This is in accord with

immersion, but is not what they would have done in a case of sprinkling.

So, in the baptism of the Phillipian jailor. If sprinkling had been the mode, the apostles could have sprinkled him in the house, and the jailor would not have run so much risk with the other prisoners while he was gone. And yet, they went out of the house for the baptism, as is proved by the fact, Acts 16:34, that he brought the apostles "into the house," immediately after the baptism. Evidently, he could not bring them in, unless he had first taken them out. Evidently, too, he had taken them out to some bath or pool, where there was water enough for immersion.

Now, all these statements and indications of an abundance of water at these baptisms are significant. Generally, the Bible is chary of mentioning incidental circumstances. We often wish the sacred writers had told us more. But here are circumstances, circumstantially related, that were of no significance if sprinkling were the mode, and are significant—decisively significant of immersion. There is no reason for their statement, unless the baptism was an immersion. They not only do not favor sprinkling, but they are against it—so much against it that they cause pedobaptists immense trouble in trying to explain them away, and after all their explaining they still are not explained away. They still stand, inspired witnesses for immersion.

When the Master was baptized, Acts 3:16, he "went up straightway out of the water," Before the eunuch was baptized, Philip and the eunuch both "went down into the water," and after the

baptism they "come up out of the water." These were very natural things to do for immersion, but what nobody now does for sprinkling, and what nobody would ever spontaneously think of doing in a case of sprinkling. Then, too, John baptized "in" Jordan, a thing that no one would do in sprinkling. Pedobaptists are very chary of getting "in" a river for their rantism. Nobody needs go "in" the water for sprinkling, but always do it in immersion. Talmage had to get "in Jordan," before he recently immersed his candidate in the Jordan, near where John baptized.

The pedobaptists meet us here with a vast array of Greek learning, to prove what no one has ever disputed, that the Greek prepositions *en* and *eis* may mean to or at, and that *apo* and *ek* may mean from. The Greek language has a smaller number of prepositions than ours has, and so has to use each of them with a wider range of meaning. The discussion therefore of these Greek particles may be made interminable and perplexing enough. But, happily, there is nothing either perplexing or interminable about the way the New Testament uses them.

In the first place, the first and leading definition of *en* is "in," of *eis* is "into," of *apo* is "from," and of *ek* is "out of." No lexicon gives them otherwise, nor is there any authority that claims anything to the contrary. Now then, in the second place, apply the universally admitted principle of interpretation, that "A word is always to be taken in its primary or leading sense, unless there is something in the context or circumstances that renders

a secondary meaning necessary," and these cases lose all their supposed difficulty.

Where it is said, in Mat. 3:6, and in Mark 1:5, that John haptized the multitudes, *en Jordane*, there certainly is nothing in the context or circumstances to require any other translation of *en* than the "in," given in our common version. No one can pretend that there is. It must therefore stand as the true translation. So, when it is said, Acts 8:38, that both Philip and the eunuch went down *eis to hudor*, "into the water," for the baptism there is nothing in context or circumstances to prevent giving *eis* its primary meaning of "into." Then they both also "come up, (*ek to hudatos,*) out of the water," and there is nothing here, in context or circumstances, to prevent *ek* from having its primary meaning of "out of." So it must be translated "out of," just as it is in our Bible.

In Mat. 3:16, and in Mark 1:10, our version has it that Jesus went up "straightway out of the water." The Greek in both cases is *apo tou hudatos*, primarily, "from the water." *Apo* may mean out of, and does sometimes, as in Mat. 7:4, "Let me pull out the mote, (*apo tous opthalmous,*) out of thine eye." In Mark, too, there is a reason for "out of," in the context, in that the preceding verse says Jesus was baptized by John, *eis ton Jordanen*, "in, (or into,) the Jordan." Being "in" the Jordan at baptizing, it was needful that he come up "out of" it. And, if Jesus was baptized "in"' the Jordan, as narrated by Mark, he obviously was also in the same act as narrated by Matthew. Hence, a good reason for our translation of "out of," in both cases. Yet the primary meaning is "from." If anybody

desires, let it stand at that. Let our version be changed to "from the water." It will still stand just as baptists everywhere talk, candidates, administrator and all, of coming up from the water, after a baptizing.

But, while we are about this matter of translation, let us look at another passage or two. In Mat. 3:11, John says, "I indeed baptize you, (*en hudati,*) in water," but which is translated "with" water, in our version. Is there anything in the context or circumstances requiring "with" rather than "in?" Clearly not. Baptizing *in* water was in fact just what he did do. Why, then, use a secondary interpretation when there is nothing to hinder the primary one, *except* the pedobaptist bias of the translators, Plainly, John did say, "I indeed baptize you *in* water." Let him be so translated as to show what he said. Then, in the last part of the verse, let the primary meaning also be given, *en pneumati agio,* "in the holy ghost," and not "with." That will give a stronger idea of its abundance and its power. The same thing applies to the translation of *en* by "with" in the same statement of John in Luke 3:16. The same faulty translation also occurs in John 1:26, where the Baptist is again made to say, "I baptize *with* water," when what he did say was, "I baptize, (*en hudati,*) *in* water."

There is not a single case where *en,* or *eis,* or *ek,* or *apo,* is used in the New Testament in connection with baptism, in which there is anything in the context or circumstances requiring any different translation than its literal, primary meaning. According, then, to the principle of interpretation, that everybody admits and nobody denies, such lit-

eral and primary meaning should be given in each case where either of them occurs. This is plain common sense, as well, and appeals to every one as just and right, and settles the question without wading through any tedious dissertations on Greek prepositions.

But when it is so settled, it also settles the question that baptizing *in* water, and going down *into* the water, and coming up *out of* it, and even coming up straightway *from* such a body of water as the Jordan, are all Baptist movements, utterly foreign, and even hostile, to the idea of sprinkling. These incidental statements, therefore, go very far toward settling the Bible mode of baptism. There is no possible significance or use for any of these movements, or for going to, or being at, the Jordan, unless the action of baptism was an immersion.

This would seem to be enough. It is evidently more than pedobaptists wish there were, as is proved by their labored efforts to explain them away. But the interlinking of the idea of immersion with fundamental doctrines of the gospel, is even more significant.

In Rom. 6:3, 4, Paul says:—"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here we are baptized into Christ's death, which immersion very significantly represents, and sprinkling does not at all. Then we are buried with him by baptism into

death, which immersion presents in a most striking object lesson, but to which sprinkling does not bear the remotest resemblance. Further, emersion, the other part of immersion, is strikingly "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," in the resurrection. Moreover, a man dead and buried, and resurrected, walks thereafter in a new life; just as we are expected to do, "in Christ Jesus," after our baptism.

Here, in the most significant and striking way, baptism is made to symbolize Christ's death, burial and resurrection. We thus proclaim clearly that we believe in a Savior who has been crucified, dead and buried, and has also been raised from the dead, thereby becoming the great Savior of men. When one is baptized, he thereby witnesses a good profession as to the kind of a Savior in whom he believes. Sprinkling not only obscures this idea, but leaves it utterly out of sight. It has not so much as a shadow of it. The great idea that Paul puts in the foreground, pedobaptism puts entirely out of sight.

Then Paul makes baptism also to symbolize the great doctrine of the atonement. It is, indeed, implied in representing Christ's death, burial and resurrection; for he died and was buried and rose again, to work out the atonement for mankind. But, the apostle is not content with this. He puts it still more prominently in the foreground. "Therefore, *we* are buried *with him* by baptism into death" —that is, we have ourselves become dead and buried to our former character and life. Then, he continues; "That, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so

we also should walk in newness of life." That is, through the atonement, we have both become dead and buried to the world, our old life, and by regeneration and a divine washing from sin, we have also been resurrected to a new spiritual life.

There could be no more plain and positive preaching of the atonement to both the eyes and the perception of all beholders. It is an object lesson of the most significant and impressive kind —as much more significant and impressive than sprinkling as a river of water is more significant and impressive than a few drops. It is even more so. Immersion tells its own story, to even the dullest minds, without need of any explanation; whereas sprinkling needs whole sermons of explanations, and then don't tell in any impressive way the great story of the Great Transformation.

Representing the resurrection of Christ, baptism also incidently represents our hope of the resurrection from the dead—that, like as he was resurrected, so shall we also be. Paul hints at this—"For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, (by baptism,) we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Peter, also, presents the same idea, 1 Pet. 3:21, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, ... by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." That is, this resurrection of Christ, represented by baptism, (immersion,) is the promise and pledge of our ultimate resurrection from the dead.

Paul repeats the same idea of baptism being a burial and resurrection, in Col. 2:12,—"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation (power) of

God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins.....hath he quickened (resurrected) together with him, having forgiven all your tresspasses." Paul evidently was no pedobaptist. Only immersion answered his conception of baptism.

In the illustration of baptism as a planting, Rom. 6:5, Paul strengthens his idea of baptism as an immersion. In planting, we do not merely sprinkle a few particles of earth on the seed, but we cover it all over, as in immersion, and there is the same difficulty to reconcile this, either in form or significance, with sprinkling as there is with a burial. Moreover, planting includes the idea of subsequent life and growth. The planted seed germinates and grows into a reproduced life. So baptism also represents the growing from the grave, in our future resurrection, into the new life of immortality.

We have, therefore, a clear interlinking of baptism, as an immersion, with three prominent characteristics of the gospel. First, representing the facts of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Second, representing, through the atonement of Christ, our own death and burial to sin, and our resurrection to a cleansed life. Third, representing the resurrection of Christ as the promise and surety of our final resurrection to a future and glorious life. These are things represented most forcibly in immersion, but find virtually no representation in sprinkling. Sprinkling obscures and practically destroys these great teachings of baptism.

Pedobaptists have not always shut their eyes to these facts. Grotius, the learned Dutch theologian in his Critici Sacri, p. 2620, says:—"The immer-

sion of the whole body in the river, so that it is completely out of sight, bore the image of the burial of the dead. The death of Christ is represented to the very eyes, and the body arising out of the water bears the image of the resurrection itself." Rosenmuller, the noted German theologian and scholar, says.—"The learned rightly think that, on account of the mystical (symbolic) meaning of baptism, the rite of immersion ought to have been retained in the Christian church." Another German, J. B. Koppe, is scarcely less emphatic. He says: —But in our day, almost all the mystical meaning of baptism has perished. It is to be lamented and condemned, that most churches have substituted sprinkling and repudiated the first original rite of immersion."

English writers speak the same way. Dean Goldburn, English Episcopalian, Bampton Lectures, p. 18, says:—"There can be no doubt that baptism, when administered in the primitive and most correct form, is a divinely constituted emblem of bodily resurrection. And it is to be regretted that the form of administration (sprinkling)..... should utterly obscure the emblematic signification of the rite, and render unintelligible .....the apostle's association of burial and resurrection with the ordinance." Dean Stanley, in an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, October, 1879, in his clear-cut and cutting style, says:—"The change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the larger part of the apostolic language regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word."

Bloomfield says:—"There is here plainly a reference to the ancient mode of baptism by immer-

sion; and I agree with Koppe and Rosenmuller that there is reason to regret it should have been abandoned in most Christian churches, especially as it has so evidently a reference to the mystic sense of baptism."

But enough. It is clear that not only the words of the Bible, but the circumstances narrated in connection with its performance, and the scripture doctrines interlocked with its symbolism, render it clear that the New Testament teaches immersion as essential to baptism.

IV—TIME OF BAPTISM.

From the nature of the ordinance, as representing in part our death and burial to the world, and our resurrection to a new life, it cannot properly take place before we have passed through those experiences, else it would be a lie, representing what did not exist.

But it is plain that in primitive times baptism followed close after conversion. The first really Christian baptisms, those at Pentecost, were evidently in immediate connection with their profession of Christ. The eunuch was baptized at once, on the roadside, without waiting even for a congregation. The Phillippian jailor did not so much as wait for the morning, but was baptized "the same hour of the night." Lydia and her believing household and friends seem to have been baptized before leaving the "river side," where they believed. Peter baptized the believing household of Cornelius, even though they were gentiles, without delay.

Philip also, at Samaria, baptized the converts at once. Paul arose and was baptized as soon as the scales fell from his eyes. In fact, every Christian baptism mentioned in the New Testament was immediately after conversion. There is neither div ne precept nor apostolic example justifying delay.

Besides, baptism is a form of making a good profession, "before many witnesses." It was an emphatic proclamation of a changed life. They had passed through a grave between the old life and the new. They were dead indeed unto the world, and alive unto God. As representing this, baptism should follow soon after the fact. This great change should not be withheld from the world longer than is necessary. This light should not be kept under a bushel. This good profession should be made as soon as the facts exist which it professes.

Besides such considerations as these, there is the observed fact that delay often results in the dropping out of some who at the outset would readily have gone forward. Perhaps some such were never converted. But, more probably, the delay has operated as a discouragement. It has been a halting, and one halt has made way for another. Instead of a pressing forward, the delay has been a holding back—and holding back is always disastrous in the Christian life. And, when there is a holding back in one thing, there is danger of holding back in other things. If baptism may be put put off, so may other things. It is a bad precedent.

The reason usually given for delay is convenience—it is more convenient to wait for warm weather, and attend to it all at once. Convenience is not a

good argument. Sinners urge it against going forward and giving their hearts to God at once, and through it are often lost. Pedobaptists urge it in favor of sprinkling against immersion. It is not convenient to be immersed—especially in cold weather. And so, for their "convenience," they have perverted God's ordinance. It is the straight and narrow way, rather than the convenient one, that leads most direct to heaven.

On the other hand, there is happiness in the Christian life, in relegating convenience to the rear, and pressing immediately to the front. The happiest candidates we ever saw were baptized amid New England and Minnesota winters, sometimes through ice three feet thick, and with the thermometer twenty degrees below zero. They realized the truth of the conplet—

> "Christians, if your hearts be warm,
> "Ice and snow can do no harm."

As a matter of fact, with proper precautions, there is not so much inconvenience about it as many suppose. But, there is victory and glory to the Christian in surrendering convenience to a willing and prompt following of the Master. Even health is more likely to be benefitted than injured by it.* Indeed, we never knew of a single one thereby injured, and have known many benefitted—and quite as likely to be benefitted in cold weather as in warm.

* In the winter of 1857-8, at Minneapolis, Minnesota, a lady so hoarse from a cold that she could not speak above a whisper, with others, was baptized through three feet of ice, with the thermometer 20 degrees below zero. Pedobaptist friends earnestly endeavored to dissuade her—that she would "catch her death," etc. But she was in a sweat before 40 rods away from the water. At night, in a voice clear as a bell, she joyously declared at the social meeting that her baptism had "cured her, soul and body!"

Then there is benefit to the church in these prompt baptisms. It saves some who would otherwise fall out by the way. It quickens the faith and promotes the faithfulness of the converts. It stirs up the zeal and the courage of the members. It attracts the attention of the world.

In an eastern city, during a powerful revival, the adjacent river was visited thirteen out of fifteen successive sabbaths for baptism. It was all through a New England winter. Nearly all of the time the ice had to be cut away, and often the air was stinging cold. But neither converts, nor church, nor congregation, hesitated. Usually, there were more people at the water, than at the church. But the noticeable point was the prestige and power it gave the church. Everybody was interested in a church where they had baptizings so nearly every Sunday. Everybody at all serious about their soul's salvation was attracted to a place where so many were so visibly following the Lord. Had the whole ninety-eight, who were baptized during that time, been baptized at one time, it would have drawn on immense congregation. But it would not have contributed anything like so much towards keeping up that four months' revival —that broke at last only because the pastor's health gave way, and the meetings and the baptizings had to be discontinued.

Let any preacher have conversions and prompt baptizings at each one of his weekly or monthly appointments, and he will soon find the tide rising. If there are fifty converted ones, baptize fifty. If there is but one, baptize that one. When the people perceive that each service, or nearly every ser-

vice, means conversions and baptisms, there is a waking-up to a conviction that there is life and power there. God is with such a people. The conversions without the baptisms have their effect. But there is a feeling that something is lacking. There is no such a taking-hold of the people, as when the profession is immediately followed by the visible proclamation of it in baptism.

In spite of the so-declared "inconvenience" of immersion, there is a joy and a power in it, that is far beyond anything there is in sprinkling, but which Baptists often partially throw away by themselves seeking convenience in delayed baptism.

V—BAPTISTRIES.

Christ's baptism, and many of the early baptisms, were in the Jordan or some other running stream. But many, like those at Pentecost and the Phillippian jailor, were in pools, that abounded in all of the towns, and often elsewhere. The one neces sity was a sufficiency of water. That secured, all other circumstances were comparatively unimportant.

And yet, many are partial to a running stream. Besides its associations with the Master's baptism, in Jordan, there seems to them a litte more of the symbolism of the washing away of sin. But clear streams are not abundant. Often, the most available place is some mud hole, with little association with cleansing. Even then, the curious and the vicious are frequently out in force, with demonstrations anything but befitting such an occasion.

It is a matter of history that the first Christian edifices were baptistries. By this term was at first meant an octagonal or round building, with considerable standing room, and what we now call a baptistry in the centre of it, where the baptizing was done. For quite a long time, the baptistry was a building separate from the church edifice. But, in process of time, it was perceived to be much less expensive to combine the two, and put the pool, or the characteristic part of the original baptistry, somewhere near, and finally generally under, the pulpit. When sprinkling generally superseded immersion, there was no farther need for the baptistry, and it fell out of use, the pedobaptist "font" taking its place.

Upon the revival of Baptist practices, the Baptists were generally both poor and persecuted. The building of church houses was difficult—often forbidden by the law. So, it was virtually a necessity that they betake themselves again to the streams, and whatever afforded a sufficient body of water for their purposes. But, as Baptists have gained standing and ability, they are coming again to use the baptistry—until nearly all large town churches have them, and many in the country—especially where living water is not abundant.

In addition to this historical sanction of baptistries, going back very nearly to apostolic times, this is to be said for them—First, they much more strikingly represent a grave, and so a burial, and then a resurrection, in being raised up from it. In this way, it more fitly and strikingly represents our death and burial to sin and the world, and our resurrection to a new life, which baptism so signifi-

cantly symbolizes. Thus its symbolism is obviously better than that of a stream, or especially, than some muddy, dirt-producing, (rather than cleansing,) pond-hole.

The surroundings are also more favorable. Rude or unbecoming conduct is seldom manifested inside a house of worship, there is less likelihood of mischance in the arrangements, and solemnity and spirituality are more easily maintained. Moreover, it is, or may be, always ready, obviating any necessity for putting off baptism to a more convenient time.*

Candidates will have their preferences, and their desires should be complied with. At first, most will prefer the outside stream or water. But, in time, especially in larger towns, the baptistry will win its way to popular favor.

The best way of keeping a baptistry supplied with water is by spouting from the roof. For the best results, this should communicate with the bottom of the baptistry, care being taken that so much as is lower than the surface of the water inside is water-tight and strong. Then have a pipe leading from the desired water-surface to some outside drain, and the thing will regulate itself and change and purify the water at every shower, making it virtually what the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles means by "living water."

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* Baptistries may be built of stone or brick, plastered and cemented, same as a cistern. But a cheaper and about equally good way is to build a frame, ceil it inside with two inch hard pine, and then lath, plaster and cement it, or line it with well-soldered tin or zinc. The proper size inside is about three by seven and a half feet, and three and a half feet deep.

VI.—TRINE IMMERSION.

Quite a large portion of the Christian world, including the Greek and Armenian churches, practices trine immersion, dipping the candidate three times, once for each of the names in the Trinity.

The first mention of this practice is made by Tertullian, about A. D. 200, who says:—"We are immersed three times, fulfilling somewhat more than our Lord has decreed in the gospel."* Chrysostom, Ambrose and Augustine speak of it as existing during the next two hundred years. After that, there seems to have been a considerable falling off to one immersion, until now the practice is mostly confined to the Greek church.

It was supported on two grounds; First, as representing Christ's three days burial;† Second, as required by the formula of the Commission—understanding it to require an immersion in each of the names of the Trinity. The first is so altogether fanciful and far-fetched, as hardly to need a serious consideration. The second is a matter of which we can judge quite as well as they—perhaps better—and most minds will more readily understand it as meaning one immersion in the three names of the one God, rather than three immersiens, as if there were three Gods. So the reasons on which the practice was based are pretty clearly not convincing.

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* Quoted in Hinton's Hist. of Bap. p. 151.

† Theophylact says:—"Whoever is baptized is buried with Christ by three immersions, representing the Lord's burial for three days." —Ad Col. c. 2. 12, John of Damascus, and Germanus of Constantinople, use almost exactly the same language.—Orthod. Fid. lib. 4, c. 10. and His. Eccles. p 146.

Moreover, as no writer mentions it before Tertullian, when many things had been introduced into the church that we now reject, it is safe to say that it was an innovation on apostolic practice. Tertullian's admission, too, that it was "something more than our Lord has decreed in the gospel," also puts it so clearly in the catalogue of deviations from primitive practice as not to require more than this brief statement of the matter.

III—THE LORD'S SUPPER.

I.—THE BIBLE STATEMENT.

Mementoes, memorials, things that revive sacred memories, are among the most treasured things of all peoples, The little lock of hair from the dead baby—how the heart beats and the eye moistens at the sight of it!

The Great Master had been with his disciples for three most eventful years. He had spoken as never man spake. He had uttered such mords of wisdom as the ages had in vain waited to hear—words of thrilling import, words of divinest tenderness and love. He had attached them to Him by an attraction that silently overmastered all the other attractions of earth. Broken for the moment at The Trial, it grew at last into the sacrifice of an unselfish martyrdom.

But, alas, human flesh is weak! The strongest and holiest affections weary amid the dust and din of life's battle. We are prone to sleep—the disciples did so—amid the most momentous experiences of life. We need reminders. The casket

needs oft times to be opened for a new gaze upon the old memento. The fire on the most sacred altar needs frequently to be rekindled.

The Master knew all this better than human tongue can tell. He knew how we forgot. He knew how the soul's fibers need also to be replenished as well as the body's. And so on that eventful night:

"As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave unto his disciples saying; This is my body which is given for you. Take, eat; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sin; and they all drank of it."—Matthew, Mark and Luke combined.

Thus does the Master most wisely arrange to keep alive within his disciples a lively remembrance of his sacrifice for them.

Paul throws further light upon the matter, 1 Cor. 11:20-34. The Corinthians had perverted the ordinance from a memorial service to a feast—from the "Lord's Supper" to the ancient feasting of the "Agapæ," where one satisfied his hunger and another his drunken thirst. So the apostle says:

"When ye come together, this (that ye do) is not the Lord's Supper. For everyone taketh his supper, (a meal) and one is hungry and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise (disgrace) ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."

In consequence of this shameful perversion of the "Lord's Supper," followed by the rebuke of the apostle, the ancient Agrapæ feast was eventually abandoned. The apostle goes on to instruct them more perfectly in the way of the Lord, as follows:

"For I have received of the Lord, that which also I have delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night that he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; for this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood, this do ye, as oft as ye do it, in remembrance of me. For, as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man evamine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself not discerning the Lord's body. For, if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And, if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye may not come together unto condemnation."

These passages show four things:

1. The object of this ordinance. It is a *Memorial Service*—to remember Christ, to discern the Lord's body, and to show forth His death, till He come—that is, to be continued till He come. These three statements comprehend two things, and two things only, one esoteric, or inward, the other exoteric, or outward—the one that we have a spiritual experience that discerns the Lord's body as broken for us, so that we can remember him as our Redeemer and Savior; the other that we thus figure or show forth the Lord's death outwardly to the world, as the only hope of lost men.

2. Who shall engage in this service? Plainly those who can "discern" the Lord's body, as broken for them personally—who can thus remember Him as *their* Lord and Master—and are thus

psepared and qualified to "show forth" to the world his death for the world's redemption.

That none but Christians can do this, even though they may be church members, is too evident to need proof. That all Christians, of whatever grade of intelligence, in understanding God's Word, or however affected by prejudice or influence, or however shortcoming as to some of the obligations of the gospel—and who can say he is complete in this?—if so be that the master overlooks them so far as to recognize them as his children—would seem equally evident. We do not see how this can be controverted. If a Christian recognized and accepted of Christ as such, cannot "remember" Him, cannot discern the Lord's body, cannot properly show forth the Lord's death, who can? Can the sinner?

We emphasize this point. Any child of God, every child of God, utterly irrespeetive of differences of belief or of practice on baptism, or anything else, if so be that he is still really an accepted child of God, can meet all the conditions *the Lord* has made to the Lord's Supper—that one "discern the Lord's body," can "remember" him, and can rightfully "show forth his death." Any other conditions are man-made conditions, utterly without warrant from the Great Master; and, he who can meet the Lord's conditions should come to the Lord's Supper.

3. Who shall "examine" the candidate and decide the question of fitness. "*Let a man examine himself.*" There is no external tribunal. There is no outside authority, that may say "Thou shalt not eat!" A man may examine himself; and if he de-

cides that in himself there is a discerning of the Lord's body, he may eat, and there is no one that may lawfully say him "Nay!" Not only *may* he do this, but all others are positively enjoined—"*Let* him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. "Whosoever, therefore, either in word or doctrine, or denominational usage, forbids him does it in direct contradiction of the Master's injunction "*Let him.*" This, of course, implies honesty on the part of the candidate. Imposition, if manifest, is to be dealt with precisely as any other imposition of similar character.

It is just as easy for us to keep away those not recognized as Christians, as for close Baptists to keep away those not recognized as close Baptists.

4. If any unworthy person eats, he brings condemnation only on himself—for "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to *himself.*"—not to the church nor to his fellows, but only to "himself" alone.

And this is emphasized by the sacred narrative in the record of the presence at the first "Supper" of Judas himself. All of the three evangelists who mention the Supper specially mention the presence of Judas at its beginning—Mat. 26:22-25, Mark 14:20 and Luke 22:14. These passages make it incontestable that Judas was present at and during the celebration of the Passover, immediately before the Supper, and we are not aware that any one questions it. But Luke, in the next verse, the 21st, after describing the Supper, says:—"*The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table!*"—proving incontestably that Judas was there at the close of the Supper, as well as at the begin-

ning, making his continuance there during the Supper a virtual certainty. The participation of the arch traitor brought no reproach to the other apostles nor to the Great Master, because he who eateth unworthily, bringeth condemnation only to himself.

Here we might leave the subject where the sacred narrative leaves it. But, unfortunately, in the complications of doctrine and of usage that have arisen, the Supper has been mixed up with matters with which the Bible does not connect it, and standards have been set up, for which confessedly there is no "Thus Saith the Lord." That this has been done conscientiously there is no reasonable question. That it has been done at the demands of a supposed principle, is also undoubtedly true—and we honor the fidelity to supposed principle, even when constrained to declare that there is no such principle involved.

We are sorry for any differences between any Christians. We regret exceedingly and sadly that our pedobaptist brethren have not maintained primitive and biblical baptism. But still we cannot give it up because they have. We cannot go away from God's word, even to agree with the dearest brethren. We especially regret and are saddened to differ with our so-called Missionary Baptist brethren, with whom we have so much in common. We greatly wish we could be one with them. They have been glorious defenders of soul freedom and of Bible simplicity and authority. We honor them —we love them! We recognize them among the most faithful defenders of the Truth in the backsliding ages, and among the most efficient promot-

ers of reform from the grasp of human assumptions in divine matters.

We sorrow especially that we must differ when standing in the shadow of the sufferings and death of our divine Redeemer. There we would stand with no other thought—no other feeling—than that of a common appreciation of the Divine Sacrifice and a common rejoicing in a common salvation. It is unseemly that children wrangle at the death bed of their common father. It is sad, almost beyond expression, that there be contention and division there. O, that in the memory of *This Death*, there might be only one common, uninterrupted flow of the closest fraternity! We are brethren, all—all who may say, "Our Father."

And so we cannot say to those who can justly utter these words, "Stand thou back from that Father's table!" We cannot do this, from the common relationship of children to a common Father, from the Bible teachings surrounding the ordinance, and also because the arguments for close communion are unsatisfactory, inconsequential, or founded on unfounded assumptions.

These latter we now proceed to consider.

II.—CLOSE COMMUNION ARGUMENTS REFUTED.

1.—The Famous Baptism Syllogism.

The first argument usually presented is what has become the somewhat famous baptism syllogism. It is put forth with a great flourish, and with an air of confidence, as much as to say—"This is unanswerable—this settles the question, once for all!" Its usual form is—

1. Baptism is prerequisite to communion;
2. Immersion is essential to baptism;
3. Therefore none but immersed believers may commune.

And then they will add—"So you see the whole question is one of baptism. It is close baptism, rather than close communion!"

But it is easy for a free communion Baptist to rout them unceremoniously from this position, by simply saying: "I have been immersed; of course then you will commune with me," whereupon there is at once a change of demeanor and of position. The voice sticks in the throat, and comes out hesitatingly—"Oh! Ah! No! Not exactly! Your baptism is all right. But you see you fellowship the pedobaptists by communing with them, and so we can't fellowship you by communing with you. In fact, you are not of our 'Own Faith and Order!'" (The fellowship argument will be considered further on.)

And so, without our needing to say another word, they themselves most incontinently desert their own famous syllogism. It isn't baptism after all, nor at all. If that were it, then, obviously, all the General Baptists, the Freewill Baptists, and all free communion Baptists, could march directly into the Baptist citadel and be entirely at home there. But their close communion bars are interposed just as much against all of us as against unimmersed unbelievers.

But, while nearly all the northern close Baptists will answer as above, the Landmarkers, and a considerable portion of the southern close Baptists, will answer differently. They will say:—"No! Your baptism is *not* all right. You were not bap-

tized by a regularly qualified administrator"—by which they mean a close Baptist minister—"and so your baptism is not valid, and you must be rebaptized"—by one of us—"before you can commune with us!"

Yet they will not even stick to this argument. Stinson, the originator, under God, of the General Baptists, was baptized and ordained by southern close Baptists. The same was also true of Father Robbins, of Missouri, and Jacob Speer, of Indiana. Through them have come nearly all—perhaps all—the baptisms and ordinations of the General Baptists. Of course, then, we are in the line of the true Baptist "Apostolic Succession." Our baptisms and ordinations are all right. Surely, they will commune with us, and will not need to rebaptize us. But, they will not. What is the matter? The hesitating answer comes—"*Oh! you don't now belong to us!*" So then, after all, it is neither the baptism, nor even the administrator. They are still using a false pretense. The real reason, when you drive them to give it, is—"You are not of our own faith and order." Baptism is nothing. Ordination is nothing. The everything is that one must belong to them. The arrogant assumption is—"*We are the only church.*" Of this, farther on.

At this juncture, we ask the close communion Baptist to choose his horn of the dilemma. If he sticks to his syllogism, his close communion is gone, as to all "immersed believers" in other denominations—certainly as to all whose baptism has come from the Baptist "Apostolic Succession." If he gives up his syllogism, to save his close communion, as to these "immersed believers"—as in

the pinch he always does—what need that we put forth any effort to overthrow it? And this syllogism, that they will not themselves stick to, is a fair sample of the affected confidence of close communionists, and the plainly illogical inconsequence of their so-called arguments.

2.—*The "Church" Syllogism.*

At this point, the close communion Baptist asks leave to amend and reconstruct his syllogism. To make it of any logical significance, he has to construct it as follows:

1. There is no true Christian Church but the close communion Baptist church;
2. Communion is a church ordinance.
3. Therefore there is no proper communion except inside a close communion Baptist church.

There is no other way of logically excluding all other Christian people from the communion—all except of their "own faith and order," as they actually do. And yet many of them do not like to accept and maintain the logic of their own position. They thus see that it degrades the Communion from the Bible "Communion of Saints" to the narrow and bigoted basis of the communion of a sect. The rank and file do not generally like to do this. But, when driven to plain, inevitable, logical consequences, the leaders do it, though with evident reluctance, all except the "Landmarkers," who accept and maintain it without flinching.

The *Advance* recently alluded to this claim of a "Right to Unchurch the Rest," whereupon the *Standard*,* the Chicago close Baptist organ, square-

* Of August 23, 1888.

ly admits and says: "*Strict communion denies churchhood to all Christian societies except the Baptist.*" There you have it, in unmistakable language. "All other *Christian*" bodies are not possessed of "churchhood" and are merely "societies." Supplying the omitted but implied middle premise, that "communion is a church ordinance," you have the syllogism complete, viz.: (1) There is no church but a close Baptist church; (2) Communion is a church ordinance; (3) Therefore, there is no communion except in the Baptist church.

It is true the *Standard* touches the matter gingerly, as they all do. They hesitate to acknowledge so bald a bigotry by a plain and direct statement of it. But their logic demands it. It is the necessary and fundamental basis of close communion. If the churches of other denominations are Christian churches, then, incontestibly, they are as justly and fully entitled to the communion as are close Baptist churches, and it can logically be denied them only on the ground that they are *not* Christian churches.

Close communion, therefore, unchurches all other Christian people. In its logic, its first and fundamental premise is—*There is no Christian church but a close Baptist Church.* All the rest are only "societies." In this argument, baptism drops into the background. "To be sure," it says to General and other free communion Baptist, "you have been baptized all right—you are baptists—especially if you get your baptism and ordination from us—no trouble at all on that score--but—but—you don't belong to 'our faith and order'—to *our* church, which is the *only* church, therefore we can't com-

mune with you!"—and, of course, all other denominations come under the same ban for the same reason. With baptism, the same as without baptism, the significant, fundamental premise and reason is because "The close Baptist church is the only church, and you do not belong to it." To free communion Baptists it says: "You are all right, except that you do not belong to *the* church, *our* close communion Baptist church."

We cannot accept this narrow, unfraternal dogma. In all that goes to manifest converted hearts and organized effective Christian work and workers, these other denominations are fully the peers of the close Baptists. In all that evidences clear and close fellowship and acceptance with the Master, the close Baptist have no advantage whatever. He blesses and prospers the others quite as abundantly and gloriously as he does the close Baptists. There are no practical evidences whatever that he disowns them, either as Christians or as Christian churches. In the divine attitude toward them there is no indication whatever of such a wide difference as that the one are his churches and the others are not.

But the close communion Baptists insist. "They have substituted a human ceremony for a divine ordinance!" So we also believe. But the close Baptists have done the same thing—they have substituted the human ceremony of the communion of a sect for the divine ordinance of the Communion of Saints—have substituted their own narrow close communion for the Bible Communion of all God's children at their common Father's table. We be-

lieve in neither. We can accept neither. We utterly reject them both.

Besides, the close Baptists have substituted another human scheme for the divine teachings that is quite as bad as pedobaptism. They substitute the Augustinian dogma of fatalism, which Augustine borrowed from the philosophy of the Stoics, as revamped by Calvin, for the Bible doctrine of Free Will—that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely. This human philosophy practically teaches that, while God calls on all men to repent, he is really playing make-believe with many of them and deceiving them, withholding the "gracious ability" to repent and believe from the non-elect, so that they in fact cannot believe and repent, or do otherwise than they do, and then damns them to all eternity for not doing what they could not do—while all the time making them feel and suppose they are free, and then guilty because they are free.

It is true that many, if not most, of the rank and file of the close Baptist denomination do not believe this God-dishonoring and man-debasing doctrine, making men moral machines and God a moral tyrant. But their standard authors and theological professors *do* believe and teach it. Even so clear and strong a man as Wayland says: All have sinned; God is under no obligation to save any; if, of his inscrutable mercy, he sees fit to save a part, no one can complain—forgetting the obvious moral necessity, that, if he sees fit to save some without conditions, he is thereby, as an infinitely good and impartial Being, put under obligation to save all in the same way—else his goodness and

impartiality are utterly and forever forfeited.

But notwithstanding this—in spite of pedobaptism on the one hand and of close communion and Calvinism on the other, we gladly recognize both as parts, not only of the church universal, but also of the organic, earthly church militant. We unchurch neither. Each is a part, but a part only, of the great church of Christ. As such, the communion belongs alike to each and to all, and to deny inter communion between and among them is to assume what is contrary to Christian love and fraternity, as well as to the equal rights of Brethren, and without warrant from the Master.

As to the communion being a church ordinance, that depends on what you mean by "Church." If you mean one, individual church, it belongs to it no more than to each and every other such individual, local church, and does not belong to any one, as such. In fact, it belongs to each and to all alike; so that no one can say, "It is mine!" to the exclusion of any other, or an individual member of any other. God has given no exclusive communion privileges to any portion of his church. It is not a Baptist table, nor a Methodist table, nor a Presbyterian table, nor any other denomination's table, nor of any individual, local church, but "The Lord's Table." If by church, you mean the aggregate of all God's church, or churches, on the earth, then no harm comes from the language, but it gives no support to exclusive or close communion. In any case, it is non-biblical, and better not be used at all.

3.—The Fellowship Argument.

The assumption that we "fellowship" the errors of those we commune with has long been one of the principal stocks in trade of the close communion Baptists, especially as against free communion Baptists. "Yes," they have said, "you are Baptists, but you fellowship pedobaptists by communing with them, and so we cannot fellowship you by communing with you!" Obviously, the assumption is that by communing with one we become responsible for his errors.

Of late, however, there has been a little yielding on this point; so that an enquirer in the *Examiner*, asks: "Is it (communion) not a commemorative and not a fellowship ordinance?" and the editor answers: "Passages like Luke 22:19, and 1 Cor. 11:26, show clearly that the main significance of the supper is commemorative." "Fellowship ordinance" has to take a back seat. It is getting too threadbare and gauzy to serve longer in the foreground. But the *Examiner* does not yet quite give it up. That would be too great a concession all at once, however creditable it might be to its logic and good sense. It adds: "But other passages, especially 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, show that it also symbolizes the union of Christians with Christ, and so with each other." Well! If this is all the "fellowship" there is in it—"the union of *Christians* (not close Baptists) with Christ and so with each other"—it is good free communion doctrine, unless it be assumed that only close Baptists are "Christians."

Without perhaps intending it, this really yields the whole point. This would simply fellowship

them as "Christians;" and free communion Baptists, believing that none but "Christians," whether church-members or not, should come to the Communion, and that all Christians should, would not seriously object to it. So far, therefore, as the *Examiner* is concerned, all is conceded that militates in the least against our free communion. And, it is but fair to say that many others also give up the "fellowship" argument.

But others do not. They still cling to it, and sometimes with a great deal of tenacity. They still insist that to commune with a pedobaptist is to fellowship his pedobaptism, and to commune with a free communion Baptist is to fellowship, at second-hand, the pedobaptism of the pedobaptist he communes with.

Obviously, if this is the case, if communing with one makes us to fellowship and be responsible for one of his errors, then it will make us, in like manner, fellowship and be responsible for any other error he may hold to; and this would make us responsible for all the errors of all with whom we commune. If this is true, communion would pile upon us responsibility for a mountain of errors, under which no soul could stand, and it would not be safe to commune with any one, as we would thereby add his errors and sins to our own.

The absurdity of this argument is so manifest, that it is only a wonder that any sensible person ever believed it; and it is no wonder that the *Examiner* and others are giving it up, and winking it out of sight. Let it depart in peace. It never had substance enough to make a respectable ghost, dearly as it used to be cherished by the close communionists.

4.—The Inference Argument.

Confessedly, there is no "Thus saith the Lord" for close communion. If there was, that would settle the matter. But there is none. Close Baptists would give anything to find one—even just *one*. But, no such authority is found in the Bible. Close Baptists rightfully insist that sprinkling and infant baptism shall not be accepted on the strength of "inference." They demand a "Thus saith the Lord;" and, because no such can be produced, they very properly reject them. But with the strangest and grossest inconsistency, close communion Baptists turn right about and adopt restricted communion on inference alone, just as utterly unable to furnish a "Thus saith the Lord" for their close communion as the pedobaptists are for their sprinkling and infant baptism. If these may not be accepted on the strength of "inference," neither should close communion. Free communion Baptists are therefore both more consistent and more "baptistic" in refusing to accept an unfraternal usage on the strength simply of an "inferance"—especially when there are more and better inferences against it.

We say therefore to close communion Baptists, throw away your unbaptistic, pedobaptist "inferences," and take scripture as meaning only what, and just what, it says. That is what you say to pedobaptists, and that is what we repeat to you from your own lips. Cease teaching for doctrines the inferences of men, and assume only what you can find a plain, unequivocal divine command for, and you will be surprised to find you have no au-

thority for driving away any of the Lord's children from the Lord's Table, and eventually relieved to perceive there is no need of carrying longer the unfraternal and bigoted assumptions of close communion.

Here, then, an issue is joined. When they find a "Thus saith the Lord" for close communion, we go over to them. Until they do, they must come over to us, or stand convicted of teaching for doctrines that which God has not commanded—that is, the doctrines of men.

In this connection, as so many, in spite of its logical inconsequence, still cling to the dogma that "baptism is pre-requisite to communion" let us look farther at it. First, it rests only on an inference from an inference, with no Bible authority for either. It first infers that all primitive disciples who came to the communion had been baptized, and then infers from that inference that baptism is pre-requisite to communion. "But," exclaims the close communionist, almost with horror, "you are a baptist, and don't you believe the apostles were all baptized before the communion?" We answer, probably! But there is absolutely no proof of it. The Bible, nor secular history, no where says so. It rests solely on an inference.

But, it is inconceivable, if this point is of so much importance as our close communion brethren insist, that it should have been left to any mere inference whatever. In their estimation, the point is fundamental—*so* fundamental as to justify and demand a line of separation and division to run clear through the body of Christ. Six words—"No unbaptized person shall eat thereof," as was said

of the Passover, "No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof,"—would have settled it. But those six words are not given, nor any others equivalent to them. The Bible is utterly silent on the point. Evidently the more natural and reasonable inference is that the point had no such importance in the mind of the Master as it has in the minds of close communion Baptists. He saw nothing fundamental here, or he would have settled the matter with his word. If it was as necessary to keep the unbaptized away from the Communion, as it was to keep the uncircumcised away from the Passover, he would have said so. They are not only wise above what is written, but wise above the Master. He didn't think it necessary to hedge this matter about. They do. And herein is a difference and a contrast.

But, if the first inference is conceded without proof, the second does not follow from it. Because one thing precedes another at some given time, it is a monstrous leap of logic to infer that it must always do so. No such inference is legitimate. To make it legitimate there must be some positive requirement of law,—as, in this case, we have seen there is not—or some necessary sequence in the nature of the things involved. As to the nature of communion and baptism, communion shows forth the sufferings and death of Christ, and baptism symbolizes his burial and resurrection. Were there, therefore, anything in the nature of the two ordinances requiring one to precede the other, since death precedes burial and resurrection, it would be that communion must precede baptism.

As a matter of fact, the Bible nowhere connects

these two ordinances in any such commanded or necessary order of sequence that either one must certainly follow the other. Whichever a disciple first sees to be a duty or a privilege for him to do, that one should first be done. Whatever sequence occurs in any given case is simply accidental and circumstantial—the result of circumstances instead of the operation of any principle. We repeat, that if any principle had been involved, the Master would not have left the matter to the uncertain and unsatisfactory conclusion of an inference from an inference—where the first inference is totally unproved and unprovable, and the second a manifest *non sequitur*, with a stronger inference against it. We turn the tables on the close communion Baptists, who insist that they will not receive infant baptism on the strength of an inference, in the absence of a "Thus saith the Lord," and declare our unwillingness to accept this proposition on the strength of a diluted inference from an inference—and further insist that in this we are more baptistic than they. They deny concerning communion the argument on which they confidently rely concerning baptism.

5.—*The "Disorderly Walker" Argument.*

Then it is said that church discipline, and the proper withdrawing from disorderly walkers, cannot be maintained without close communion. This is an exceedingly small man of straw, of exclusive close communion make. We find no difficulty in that direction.

When one of our members living a godly life changes his opinions, we do not throw dirt after him,

but give him a letter to join a church he likes better, and when he comes back to visit us we are glad to meet him at our common Father's table. When one of our members falls from grace and we think he has ceased to be a Christian, we turn him out, and never invite him again to the communion, unless he gets reconverted, so to speak, when we take him back, and then of course invite him to the table. There is, therefore, no trouble in our maintaining discipline and withdrawing from disorderly walkers. Free communionists do not find the least use for close communion as a church-maul, no, thank you.

The whole force of this argument rests upon the unfraternal and bigoted assumption that all Christians not members of a close Baptist church are "disorderly walkers." Let them recognize other denominations as Christians and Christian churches, and cease refusing to give letters to those of their good members who wish to join some other evangelilca church, and not exclude them as though they were children of the devil, and they too would have no farther use for this argument. One of the worst evils among Christians is this pharisaical disposition to throw unfraternal epithets and ecclesiastical clubs at those who chance to differ from them on points not involving personal Christian character. And there are few things that promote this disposition more than close communion. When close communion dies—as some day it will—we shall be nearer the spirit of heaven than we are now,

6.—*The "Divine Order" Argument.*

One of the most common, and most confidently asserted, close communion arguments is that there

is a "Divine Order" of Christian duties as taught in the Great Commission, and in Acts 2:41, 42. "Free communion," they exultantly say, "violates the Divine Order; it stands in direct opposition to God's word"—appealing for proof to the above passages. Let us see.

The Great Commission, Mat. 28:19, 20, says—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." It is properly assumed that the communion is among the "all things whatsoever" and then, because the "all things whatsoever" is named after the "baptizing," it is improperly assumed that baptism must be "a prerequisite to communion."

But, prayer, profession, repentance, faith, conversion, and even baptism itself, equally with the communion, are also and equally among the "all things whatsoever" that Christ has commanded. Of this, there can be no question. And so, if the argument is good for anything, it equally proves that baptism is "a prerequisite" to all these, as well as to the communion. Of this, also, there can be no question. It is as plain and conclusive as anything can be. Yet, the close communionists will not accept the inevitable logic of their own argument. Like other evangelical Christians, they believe that all these—prayer, profession, repentance, faith, conversion—should all come before, and not after, baptism—and that baptism cannot precede itself.

Acts 2:41, 42 reads—"They that gladly received

the word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." Verse 46 shows that this "breaking bread" was "daily" and "from house to house," where "they did eat their meat, (Gr. *trophes*, food, nourishment, sustenance,) with gladness and singleness of heart," and so was not the communion at all, but an exhibition of that "all things in common," that for a time prevailed among the first Christians, and somewhat like that which temporarily prevails among us at associations and other gatherings.

But, granting that the communion was meant, if the passage proves a divine or necessary "order," then "prayers" cannot come until after both baptism and the Lord's Supper—which even close communion Baptists do not believe—since "prayers" are not mentioned until after the "breaking of bread."

So, then, this "Divine Order" argument, if it were good for anything, would out-Campbell the Campbellites, in that it would require baptism, not only before conversion, but before belief, repentance, faith, profession, prayers, and all the other "all things whatsoever" that Christ has "commanded," including baptism itself. It is safe to say that a weaker argument could not well be made. It is so manifestly inconclusive and fallacious, that the wonder is how intelligent minds ever attempted to use it, or believe it—much less to accuse others of disobeying a divine command, on the strength of it.

And yet, *it is one of the main stays of close com-*

munion. It is astonishing to what illogical and unbiblical lengths prejudices and pre-conceived opinions sometimes lead a very excellent people. Obviously, there is no such "Divine Order" in these passages. It is a clear case of attempting to amend the Bible, and put into it what the inspired writers never put in it.

7.—*The Relic of Popery Argument.*

Our close communion Baptist friends get not a little consolation in that pedobaptists, alike with them, believe baptism to be pre-requisite to communion, and they trace the dogma clear back to Jerome and Justin Martyr. And then they shout, "See how everybody is against you! It is conceded on all hands that baptism is pre-requisite to communion."

They have forgotten that a comparatively short time ago pedobaptists said the same thing about immersion, and they answered that truth was never destroyed by the number not believing it—else the devil, having always thus far had a large majority, would be the especial champion of truth, instead of being the father of lies.

They have forgotten, also, how they showed that during the development of Popery in the western church, there was developed the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, that baptism was essential to salvation. Hence, as parents want their children saved, so they wanted them baptized in order that they might be saved; and, as friends wanted sick friends (clinics) saved, and they thought they could not be immersed, so they begged for and received

pouring, and eventually sprinkling, as a substitute. In a like manner, as baptism was deemed essential to salvation, so naturally and necessarily it came also to be accepted as prerequisite to communion.

It is in this way that both the unbiblical doctrine pedobaptism and the equally unbiblical doctrine that baptism is pre-requisite to communion grew up in the Roman catholic church. And the one follows from and is a logical result of the other. They can not be separated. If baptism is essential and pre-requisite to salvation, it must be also to the communion; and, if baptism is not essential to salvation, neither is it to communion. The pernicious Papal doctrine of baptismal regeneration is the root and life of both of them; and we again beg leave to be more "baptistic" than our close communion Baptist friends, and so refuse to accept either of them. They reject the premise, that baptism is essential to salvation, but most illogically accept the conclusion, that therefore it is essential to the communion. We, like them, reject the premise, and then consistently carry out the inevitable logic of also rejecting the conclusion. We will have neither. Both alike are relics of Popery. In this we occupy much the safer position.

They can, if they choose, continue to drive out their Pentecosts and Behrends and Dowlings in order to save their "relic of Popery," but we beg leave to be excused from thus following the "Moth-of Abominations." We prefer, if need be, to be in a minority, with truth and Christian fraternity on our side. But this Papal dogma cannot stand investigation, and like pedobaptism will eventually give way before a spiritual and biblical under-

standing of the gospel. Free communion Baptists will not always be in a minority. The dogma that baptism is essential to regeneration having been given up by all Protestants, they will all have eventually to give up also with it that which depends alone on it, the other equally unbiblical and illogical dogma of baptism as essential to communion.

It may also be added that pedobaptists do not hold tenaciously to the necessary antecedence of baptism to communion. It has come to them as a sort of heirloom, along with some other Roman catholic rubbish, from the past. They have given no earnest thought to the subject, seldom or never preach it, and really put their readiness to commune with others on the same ground that we do —on the fact that they are Christians, have in themselves the vital fact symbolized in the ordinance.

8.—The Landmark Argument.

A portion of the close communion Baptists, called Landmarkers, mostly in the South, not only deny "church-hood" to all other churches than their own, but deny the validity of baptism, (immersion,) administered by anyone but themselves. Hence they deny the validity of not only immersion administered by pedobaptists, but also when administered by General, Freewill, or any other liberal Baptists, and so would re-baptize any one who would go from us to them.* They assert that baptism, to be valid, must not only be by immer-

* A rather amusing illustration of this came out in a convention of Missionary and General Baptists at Boonville, Indiana, in 1881. See "Benoni Stinson and the General Baptists," p. 329.

sion, but it must also be administered by a "legally qualified administrator," that is, by one a member of a close Baptist church, who has also been both baptized and ordained by a "legally qualified (close baptist) administrator" before him.

Obviously, this position assumes that there must be an unbroken chain of "legally qualified administrators," all the way back to the apostles. A break in one place is precisely as fatal as a break in any other place. Z might as well be baptized by an "illegally qualified administrator," as by one whose ministerial pedigree was all right all the way to O, or B, if so be that N, who baptized O, or A, who baptized B, was not a legally qualified administrator. Nothing can well be more clear than this.

Now, here is plainly another Relic of Popery. It is neither more nor less than the Papal doctrine of "Apostolic Succession"—that every minister must be ordained by somebody, who was ordained by somebody, who was ordained by somebody, and so on uninterruptedly and without a single break, until the first somebody was ordained by an apostle. The pasture is a Baptist one, but the animal undoubtedly belongs to the Papacy.

And so, these strait-laced, Landmark Baptists fish around among the musty and uncertain, and contradictory, records of the Anabaptists, the Munsterites, and especially the Waldenses and Albigenses, to find some trace of an uninterrupted succession back to the apostles. All Protestants aver that the Papal chain back to Peter is altogether uncertain and entirety unsatisfactory —that it is a case not made out. There evi-

dently is not that certainty about it that there should be, if such fundamentally important things depend upon it. But, if this is to be said of the Papal argument, what must be said of this Landmark Baptist one! It is an hundred fold weaker than the Pope can make. And so, while we free communion Baptists in common with all the rest of the protestant world, reject the Pope's argument, so, a hundred times more, we reject this shadowy, Landmark imitation of it.

But, this Landmark doctrine of succession not only unchurches and unbaptizes all Liberal Baptists, but it does the same to a large majority of even the Missionary Baptists. While some of the baptisms and ordinations of the American Baptists came from English and other foreign Baptists—though it is by no means certain that there was no break farther back—yet the large majority of them come through the Roger Williams' channel, who was baptized by Ezekiel Holliman, who had not himself been immersed by any one—much less by one of these Landmarker successors of the Apostles.* Consistent Landmarkism therefore can no more recognize the baptism and "churchhood" of these Missionary Baptists, than they can the baptisms (immersion) of free communion Baptists, or even those of the pedobaptists—to such straits do wild vagaries and one sided theories lead one.

Besides, as we seen, the logic of their argument would compel them to commune with us, since we received our baptism and ordination from

* It is but just to say that some of the Landmarkers deny that northern Baptists' baptisms came through Roger Williams. But the great mass of the Baptists, represented in the American Baptist Publication Society, admit it,—and defend it.

them. Yet they will not. Logic is a small thing when it interferes with their *ipse dixit*. Our baptism and ordination was received all right. But—but—but, we don't now belong to them, to their *the* church.

The Landmark theory and argument are utterly at variance with all our ideas of the fraternity, the charity, the love of the gospel—utterly at variance with the predominance of the spiritual over the outward and formal in the Christian economy—utterly at variance with our understanding that it is the Divine Life within us, rather than the simple observance of forms and ceremonies, that fits us both for heaven, and also for the church—utterly at variance with our conceptions that the way to heaven is over a road so plain that the fool need not err therein, instead of being a way so devious and blind that the wisest cannot feel sure of finding it, and none but a bigot can be confident he is in it—depending on a doctrine that can never absolutely be proved. We, certainly, have not so learned Christ.

Landmarkism is the "church syllogism" intensified. All that we said under that head also applies to this. It is the very essence of assumption, of bigotry, of arrogance, and of intolerance. It declares what God has not uttered, denies fellowship with the larger portion of God's elect, stifles the voice of the Divine Life in the soul, and builds up selfrighteousness, exclusiveness, bigotry and strife. We will have none of it. Rather will we say of all God's people, in all denominations, "*All we are Brethren.*"

III.—OBJECTIONS TO CLOSE COMMUNION.

1.—It is Non-Biblical.

We take the Bible as our rule of religious faith. If there were any close communion in that, we would accept it. But there is not. We have called, again and again, for even one single text in its favor. But we call in vain. There is none. The whole dependence of the close communionists is on inferences and far-fetched assumptions, without any attempt whatever to produce a "Thus saith the Lord!" We strenously object to such a non-biblical dogma.

2.—It Promotes Phariseeism.

Its tendancy is to cause those who believe it somehow to feel that they are superior to other Christians—that they are God's favorite people—that they stand in a nearer and dearer relation to God than other Christians do—they may come to his table, while others, no matter how devoted and Christ-like, must stand aside, and have no business there. And so, generally without being conscious of it, they virtually come to exalt themselves, much like the Pharisee—"God, I thank thee that I am not as other men.....or even as" these poor publicans of the other denominations—*ours are "churches," possessed of "churchhood," theirs are only "societies."*

3.—It is Exclusive and Unfraternal.

All Christians are children of God, and so are

brethren. They, therefore, manifestly ought to treat each other as brethren and equals. But a close communionist cannot do that and preserve the spirit of his close communion. He must stand apart. He must refuse to unite and co-operate with others in good works. His work and worship must be by himself. He cannot commune with others. He cannot recognize them as churches—only "societies"—and so he cannot consistenly recognize their ministry—for they have neither been ordained nor baptized in an "orderly," that is, a close Baptist way. And so they wrap their pharisaical close communion cloak around them, and stand apart, that they may not "fellowship" the others' "errors" or be contaminated by their "disorderly walk."

4.—If not Unfraternal, it is Inconsistent.

As a fact, most close communionists are more fraternal than their doctrine. In spite of its exclusiveness, many of them will unite with other ministers in union services, will preach and pray with them, exchange pulpits with them, compliment and encourage their "societies," as though they were churches, and together plead with sinners to be reconciled to God—and only fly of in an unfraternal tangent when the Lord's Table is spread.

But we submit that all this, creditable as it is to their Christian charity, is at the expense of their consistency. It is not in keeping with their close communion, but in antagonism to it. To be sure, their inconsistency is better than their consistency, but it *is* inconsistent, for all that. The hope is

that they will eventually come to perceive it, and forsake it, and come to fraternize at the communion table as well as elsewhere.

5.—It is a Stumbling-Block to the World.

The world says:—"Here are a lot of people that profess to be all of one family, the children of the same father, and they profess, too, to be a very loving people. But they wont even eat together at the same table. How is this? We worldly people are seldom so bad as that, and when we are, we are mightily ashamed of it. We can't see that such an unfraternal religion can be of much use to us!" And so the world stumbles over the opposition communion tables set among Christians. The *Lord's* table can hardly be a representation of such division as that. *He* prayed that his children might be one, even as he and his father are one. Close communion is a prayer that they may be divided.

5.—It is out of Harmony with the Divine Life.

When one comes into the possession of the Divine Life in the soul, there is begotten there a great love for "the brethren," for all Christians; and, the more one has of this divine experience, the more intense is his love for God's people. Now close communion is out of harmony with this spirit of loving fraternity; and so close Baptists always find a difficulty in indoctrinating converts into close communion—as they frequently admit, more trouble with it than with all other questions put together. They have the same difficulty with close communion that

pedobaptists have with sprinkling and infant baptism. The fact of this lack of harmony between close communion and the Divine Life is unquestioned and unquestionable, and we prefer the free communion that is in such entire harmony with it.

7.—It is out of Harmony with the Spirit of Heaven.

Christian of all ages, of all peoples, of all denominations, will have the closest fellowship and communion in heaven. There will be no division of tables there—no close communionism to get off into some corner to celebrate a communion, or anything else, exclusively by themselves. It seems to us that the more of that spirit we have on earth the better, and that anything out of harmony with it is exceedingly undesirable, and cannot be a part of any divine arrangement.

IV.—DIRECT ARGUMENT.

1.—Christ's Command.

"Drink ye all of it!" said the Master, and one of of the evangelists says they obeyed, "and they all drank of it." Those who partook of the commemorative Supper on that eventful night were the representatives of the whole church, and of all Christians, for all time. Through them alone comes the injunction to observe the ordinance; and the command that "all" who enjoy the same relation of disciples and "friends" should drink of it is as binding on all subsequent disciples as the command that they observe the ordinance at all. The "all" is as imperative as the "drink ye!" So it is that

the Master enjoins all who enjoy the priceless salvation purchased by his broken body and shed blood to "remember" him in this ordinance.

"But," interjects the close communionist, "they were all baptized!" Not so fast. They were none of them baptized according to the Commission. Not one of them had been baptized in a way that would now satisfy our close Baptist friends. None of them had been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to represent a crucified, buried and resurrected Savior—since he had not then been crucified, buried or resurrected. In fact, Christian baptism as such, was not then instituted, nor had the church, one of those institutions it is, been then set up, nor was it until Pentecost. So badly mixed do these Baptist sticklers get things.

Nothing daunted by this defeat, they return to the charge—"But they had been baptized by John, and that answered all purposes." Perhaps they had, and perhaps they had not. There is no proof either way. At best, whichever side you take is only a surmise, and baptists are not in the habit of taking surmises for proof. But, where there was a clear case of John's baptism, Paul decided that it did *not* answer all purposes. Finding certain disciples at Ephesus, Acts 19:1-2, who had been baptized by John's baptism, he instructed them that it was not Christian baptism, and rebaptized them. John's baptism was the rite of a previous order of things, and was not valid under a new dispensation. Our close communion friends may settle the matter with Paul. If they are right, Paul was wrong.

But, as we have seen, there is not the least proof that they had been baptized by John. If they had been, the fact obviously was not deemed of sufficient significance to be recorded. If they were, and the Landmarkers had been there, no doubt they would have put it down in very large letters. That it is not put down at all, pro or con, looks not a little as though Christ and the apostles were not Landmarkers. We hold the Landmarkers to the proof, not because we deem the point of any importance, but because the Landmarkers are such sticklers for proof, that we are not disposed to let them off without proof. Come, brethren, bring on your proof. One can infer almost anything. Let us have the proof—the plain, satisfactory proof—that the first communicants had been baptized at all, with any baptism—as they certainly had not been by what we all now regard as Christian baptism.

The fact is the originators of anything have to start without any antecedents, John obviously originated his baptism without having been himself baptized. In like manner, Christian baptism had to start without any antecedent behind it. As Christian baptism, it was a new thing. From necessity, the Christian baptizers at Pentecost had to commence baptizing without having been baptized themselves by the kind of baptism they administered. Nobody had ever before been baptized in that way, so there was no administrator of that kind to be had. The church was not yet a day old, and this was the first baptism under it—obviously and necessarily administered by men—authorized to do it by the Master—but who had not them-

selves received the baptism they administered.

Hence, the communicants at the first communion were in a similar position to our pedobaptist brethren now—that is, if they had been baptized by John. They had been baptized by a kind of baptism, but it was not the right kind. Yet the Master admitted them to his table, to eat and drink in remembrance of him. Still it would be very creditable to our pedobaptist brethren, if like those "certain disciples" at Ephesus they should learn "the way of the Lord more perfectly," and, like them also, be immersed "in the name of Jesus Christ."

Having disposed of the baptismal part of the question, let us see what sort of disciples these first communicants were in other respects.

They were not all equal in their appreciation of the gospel. They differed as widely in many things as do the different denominations now. Peter had afterward to be "converted," down at the house of Cornelius, to a principle of the gospel more fundamental than most of the points that separate evangelical Christians now—that "of a truth, God is no respector of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." He was also so deficient in devotion and steadfastness, that only a few hours after partaking he denied his Lord and engaged in cursing and swearing. "Likewise also said they all"—that is, all the disciples were weak enough to deny their Master.

The loving John was also so "slow of heart to believe all the prophets had written," that he gave up his apostleship and discipleship and went back

to his old trade of fishing, and the other old fishers went with him. Thomas was utterly lacking in faith in the resurrection—that central doctrine of Christianity, quite as important as "Apostolic Succession," the "Doctrine of Grace," or even the form of baptism. The rest of them were so completely demoralized and discouraged as to make absolutely no manifestation of trust, or even hope, in the Master. "*We had* hoped," said one of them, on the way to Emmaus, in his present despair, and he probably voiced the feeling of the whole of them.

Altogether, they were a sorry set between the crucifixion and the day of Pentecost. Good pedobaptists manifest more devotion to the Master and undoubtedly enjoy more of the divine life in the soul, and are fitter communicants, than were they during this period.

And yet, these weak and "erring brethren," these faithless disciples, these "disorderly walkers," and dull of comprehension as to important principles and doctrines, had all rightfully partaken of the Communion; for they had done it at the direct command of the Master himself. So, at the present time, as then, the weak ones, or those not fully or rightly understanding, or practising, all of the principles or doctrines of the gospel, yet being disciples, should partake of "The Lord's Supper."

So, when the *Lord's* Table is spread, all the Lord's children, however weak and erring, if so be they are his children, though feeling their unworthiness like a load upon them, should hear the Master say, "Drink ye all of it!"—and obey.

2.—It is "The Lord's Supper."

The fact that it is "The Lord's Supper," and so "The Lord's Table," significantly settles the whole question. Child-ship carries with it the title to a place at the father's table. There can be no better title. Every child not disowned by the father has of right a place at the family table. Do they say pedobaptists are disowned, as children of God? They dare not say that—they do not say that. They admit they are children, "and, if children, then heirs." And can "children" and "heirs" rightfully be refused a place at the paternal table—and by those who are only fellow-children and fellow-heirs with themselves? Surely not.

We have indeed heard close Baptists say:—"If this were *our* table, we would gladly invite you to it, but it is the Lord's Table, and we dare not do it?" But, if it is the Lord's Table, what right have *you* to drive any body away? Suppose you let the Lord take care of his own table? "Oh," they say, "the Lord has directed us to shut you out." But, *where, when, by what words? Where is your authority?* And they can only say:—"We admit that you are God's children, that he blesses and communes with you spiritually, just as richly and fully as he does us; we admit that he has nowhere directed us in so many words to turn you away; we admit also that he has nowhere *said* you shall not come to his table; but, as you do not understand one of his commands just as we do, or you 'fellowship' by communion with them those who do not, we *infer* you have no business there, and that we are authorized to drive you away." What a wretched inference!—What a monstrous assumption!

And thus, without putting it to their own thought in that light, they *say* it is God's Table, while they *act* that it is their own table. Or, if that be not it, then it is that they assume to mend God's matters by their own wisdom. They assume that God did not understand the matter, that he did not sufficiently provide for all the exigencies of his church. They practically say:—"To be sure, God knew that in process of time there would be a large number of unimmersed children of his; but he was careless about the matter, and left it in such ungarded shape—even commanding 'all' to partake of his supper—that unless we carefully fix up his fences for him, there will be danger that some of these other children of his, that he seems to like and bless as much as he does us, will come too, and we shall not enjoy a monopoly of this Supper."

And so close communion assumes to amend and supplement God's Word with what he has not put into it. And this is the secret of their having so much trouble in indoctrinating their converts into close communion. On the question of baptism, they get along finely. They just open their Bibles and read. But on the communion question, they have, pedobaptist like, to resort to inferences and roundabout reasonings, from outside the plain Word of God.

And, then, notice the assumption in another direction—that they are so much more loving and generous and kind than God, that they would like to commune with other Christians, if he would only let them—they would really like to do it, if they only dared to. Says the *Examiner*:* "The nat-

* August 23, 1888.

ural promptings of Christian sympathy would lead us to invite to it all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. We would be glad to invite them, if we dared." Notice, too, how much more "sympathy" they have for God's children than he has himself. Their warm love would embrace them, were it not for his stern, unloving repulsion. In his cold presence, they do not *dare* to.

Again we ask, show us the "terms" God has made driving any of his children away from his table—and still we ask in vain. Before our demand for a plain, unequivocal voice of the Lord, our opponents are dumb. It seems to us it were better had they been dumb before they put forth what they cannot back up by the manifest Word of the Lord. Pardon us if we utter the thought of our heart, that close communion is an altogether unwarranted attempt to steady the Ark and Oracles of God.

When the prodigal returned, the father's door was not closed against him. He had forfeited the legal right. But the father's heart bid him welcome, and the father's arms joyfully embraced him. Tell us not, then, that our Father can turn a single one of his children from his table. That it is his table and that we are his children is in itself a surer passport for us to his table than that a father pitieth his children—so much does our heavenly Father's love transcend all human affection. Our Christian birthright is the sure pledge and assurance of our right and acceptance at our Father's board.

In discussing the communion, our close Baptist brethren invariably and almost instinctively turn to questions of outward observance and

ceremonials—to questions of baptism and church relations, and ecclesiastical "order"—all good enough and right in their place—but altogether ceremonial, and having nothing to do with the state of the heart. A man may be baptized, and be a regular member of a regular (Baptist) church, and yet be a Simon Magus, whom Peter declared to be "in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity."

It is far more important that the heart be right—that the person have in his inner experience the death to the old life and the resurrection to the new, which baptism symbolizes. That is *the* thing, and should remain constantly in the thought when the communion table is approached. Simon Magus' baptism and church membership did not count for so much in the eyes of Peter as baptism and church membership are apt to count in the eyes of Landmarker, close communion Baptists.

That, certainly, is a very poor guard to the Communion, that would let in a Simon Magus, because he had been baptized and was a member of the church, and shut out a soundly converted and thoroughly consecrated Christian, who had blundered or stumbled at baptism—having the thing, but failing in the outward symbol of it. And here is just the difference between the free and the close communionist. The free communionist makes the test of the Divine Life in the soul, with or without the outward symbol of it. The close communionist makes the outward symbols the test, with or without the Divine Life within. Which is the better? Judge ye! Practically, the close communionist says:—"Hast thou been regularly baptized, by a regularly qualified (close Baptist) administrator,

and are you a regular member of a regularly constituted (close Baptist) church? If thus regular and 'orderly,' thou mayest." On the other hand, the Free Communionist asks:—"Art thou dead indeed unto the world, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and art thou consecrated to his service? If so it be that the Divine Life dwells in you and is manifesting itself to the world, thou mayest, and thou oughtest to eat at your Father's table."

Free Communionists, therefore, believe the same qualifications necessary for the communion as for baptism, and for baptism as for communion, namely a converted heart and a transformed life, with no reference whatever to any order of observance between them.

3.—Universal Christian Consciousness.

The voice of the universal Christian Consciousness proves the propriety of Free Communion.

Every new-born convert longs for communion, both the inner and the outward, with every other Christian. It came to him with the inbreathing of the Divine Life in his soul. It grows and strengthens with his every step of advance in the spiritual life. The nearer he gets to the Master, the more he feels like communion with all the Master's children. And this Christian impulse is in every convert's heart. He may have been converted under close communion influences, but it is there all the same. He may never have heard of free communion, but the longing for it has come to him and dominates him, and he cannot put it entirely from

him. He may think it duty to smother and crush it out, but it will not be smothered or crushed out. Even after long years of believing and preaching close communion, like Dr. Bright, of the *Examiner*, still this conscious Christian longing within him asserts—"We should be glad to if we dared."

And this conscious Christian aspiration, thus impelling to free communion, has asserted itself in every Christian heart, in all ages, in all climes, among all nations and tribes, under all circumstances. It has developed itself, and manifested itself, wherever there has been any Christian experience and life. And it has never deviated in its utterances. Its testimony has been uniform and unvarying. And, moreover, the more fully the Divine Life has developed, the more manifest and stronger also has been this development of the Christian Consciousness.

This consciousness, therefore, has thus far been inseparably connected with the universal Christian experience. It has commenced when that commenced. It has grown with its growth. It has never been crushed out or smothered, even by supposed logic or believed-to-be principles. It begins with the dawn of spiritual life in the individual soul, and goes with it to the end. It has manifested itself from the beginning of Christianity until now, in all nations and in all the Christian ages. Nor, can this universal Christian Consciousness be invalidated, without also invalidating the Christian and spiritual life with which it has been inseparably connected. If the one is a lie and a delusion, the other must of necessity be also?

This universal Christian Consciousness is there-

fore the outspeaking of the divine life in the soul—is the voice of God uttering a most significant testimony in favor of the inter-communion of all saints. We may be mistaken as to the interpretation of texts. We may not properly understand the application of principles. We may be at fault as to methods of service. But we cannot mistake if we follow the guidance of this universal Christian longing. So sure as the Christian experience and life is not itself a sham and a deception, so surely can this longing be relied on and followed. It comes from God. It is the point in our lives where we get nearest to God—where we most distinctly hear his voice.

If close communion could keep the soul near to God in holy living, and yet suppress this longing then it might have some ground to stand upon. But it cannot be done. Every attempt in that direction ends in disastrous failure. Build up the fires of Christian love and consecration on the inner side of the close communion fence, with similar fires in a pedobaptists camp on the outside, and it takes a mighty effort to keep these fires from burning down the intervening barriers, and coalescing into one grand communion of love, that spontaneously seeks the use of the commemorative symbol of the divine love that died alike for all.

Close communion does not thrive on such experiences. It does not fatten on the experience of the divine love. The more there is of such experience, the weaker the close communion bars become—and this outworking of the Divine Life will eventually remove these bars altogether and forever. They cannot abide such divine affinities. Close commun-

ion thrives on tithing the mint and the anise and the cummin of ceremonialism, to the omission, if not the exclusion, of the weightier matters of the law. Close communion fostres phariseeism—"I am holier than thou!"—"I am not even as these poor pedobaptists!" It is founded on unfounded assumptions and builds up narrowness and bigotry and self-righteousness. Its fruits are not good.

This universal hungering of the Divine Life for intercommunion is as reliable as is the material hungering for bread, on the mental hungering for knowledge. That God placed this hungering for bread within me, proves that he designed I should eat. That he made me to hunger after knowledge, proves he designed I should have knowledge. That he has put this spiritual hungering in the Christian soul, proves he designed we should have the intercommunion it so universally and earnestly craves.

4.—The Design of the Communion.

The design of the communion is evidently commemorative—to commemorate him who gave his life that we might be made alive in him. "This do," he said, "in remembrance of me!"—a statement as concise and significant of commemoration as it could well be made. The bread commemorates his broken body. The cup his shed blood. Again, he says:—"As oft as ye do this, ye do show forth (commemorate) the Lord's death." Paul, 1 Cor. 11:26-29, reiterates, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show (commemorate) the Lord's death." He also adds:—

"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." Of course, then, the object of the eating and drinking is to discern or commemorate the Lord's body, in its flesh and blood, as crucified for us.

Paul makes another reference to the matter in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (commemoration) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (commemoration) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one (spiritual) bread," represented by the communion. Dr. Bright, of the *Examiner*, thought he found a fellowship argument in this. But, rather than this, it is chock full of commemoration. Instead of commemorating our relations to each other, it commemorates the relation of the Great Master to each one of us.

This being the design, who shall unite in the commemoration? The close communionist answers—"Those who have been baptized by a regularly qualified (close Baptist) administrator, and belong to a regularly constituted (close Baptist) church." Somehow, this does not sound altogether like the Bible. We do not remember to have seen it there. It must belong to a supplementary book, that the close Baptists have, and the rest of us do not have—a sort of sub or post Apocalypse.

There is not one word or hint in this about being born again, and the possession of the divine life—not one word about being united spiritually to Christ, our living head—not one word about our

possession of the inner experience which alone can fit us to commemorate Christ's body as broken and his blood as shed, for us. It has to do only with the outward and the ceremonial—the shell without the kernel.

Now, while it is plain that one cannot properly remember Christ who has not been saved by his sacrifice of himself, no matter how well baptized, or by whom, so one who has been washed and saved by the blood of Christ *can* remember and commemorate Christ's body as broken for him and his blood as shed for him—whether baptized or unbaptized. If one has had the experience of the thing itself, certainly he can remember it, and, if he does not do so, it is putting the light that is in him under a bushel—rolling his talent up and hiding it in a napkin.

The thing is about as self-evident as an axiom. Christ is my Savior. I am saved by his blood. Therefore must I commemorate that glorious experience. I cannot help it. It impels me. It controls me. I cannot suppress it, without crucifying the life of God within me. And why should I? As well might a living man refuse to breathe, or a hungry one refuse to eat.

That all such persons can commemorate a Savior's dying love is too evident to be denied. Shall they do it? These persons are the children of the Living God. Must they hold their peace and stand aside when their Father's Table is spread? As well tell a son he shall not remember and commemorate the character and life of his departed father. As well tell a daughter she shall not honor the mother who died to give her birth, because she

does not wear some peculiar outward uniform. The relation of parenthood and childhood overrides all such outward distinctions.

Hence, then, wherever there is a Christian soul, that can say, *He is my Savior,"* he may not only say it with his lips, but he may and ought to say it also in the symbolism of the communion.

5.—*Free Communion the Spirit of Heaven and Preparatory to It.*

No one pretends there will be any close communion in heaven, or anything analogous to it—no getting off into a corner of any part of its inhabitants to celebrate any rite or ceremony exclusively by themselves. All who get to that happy place—and no one dares say pious pedobaptists will not get there—will not be setting up bars and division lines between themselves and others. They will there realize the complete fulfilment of the Great Master's prayer that they all be one, even as he and the Father are one.

Those who reach heaven will find John the Baptist and Thomas A Kempis in loving communion, though one was a pedobaptist. He will find there Arminius and Calvin, Bunyan and Bourdaloue, Luther and Wesley, Paul and Fletcher, Knox and Madame Guyon, and millions of others, with varying beliefs and practices, while here, but each and all at home there. They will all possess a divine affinity, by which they would not keep apart if they could, and could not if they would. The attraction of the heart would be too strong for any possible divergence of the will. They will not know every-

thing there. But they will know more than they did here—will know enough not to partition themselves into little exclusive squads, here and there, by themselves.

It is true there will be no literal communion there. They will have advanced beyond all symbolism. But the spirit, the very life symbolized, will be there in its fullest development. It will be the culmination, the fruition, of all that the symbol pointed out and pointed to, and that will have no resemblance to a divided and sectarian communion. The culmination will have no element of close communion in it.

Now, why take so much time and thought, and put forth so much effort, to put up bars that must disappear there, to promote and perpetuate divergencies here, while there all the tendencies will be convergencies. Can a drawing together there be promoted by a drawing apart here. And will not the coming together in free communion here help the fraternal and loving spirit that will reign there. Instead of cultivating a spirit which will have to be laid aside there, it will be cultivating beforehand the fraternity and communion that will culminate there, and add one of the best of the elements of glory that will reign there. Free communion will work out of us the exclusiveness, and intolerance, and phariseeism, and bigotry, that can find no place there, and so materially better fit us for heaven.

So let us, as many and as often as we can, come together, and celebrate together, the Great Memorial Supper, and compel the on-looking world to say, "See how these brethren love one another,

and fraternize one with another!" instead of saying —"See how unloving and unfraternal they are!"

6.—It is the Communion of Saints.

From this, as well as from all Bible teachings on the subject, it follows that the Communion is the "Communion of Saints, not the communion of a sect." "All who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth," as Dr. Bright confesses his Christian Consciousness would impel him to say, should sit down together, as far as circumstances will permit, and together in holy fraternity and love, commemorate the suffering and sacrifice for them of their common Lord. What a beautiful and impressive sight! How it exalts the encompassing power of gospel grace. How significantly it declares to a carping world—"See how, in spite of our differences, we are all loving brethren still."

IV—FEET WASHING.

General Baptists, unusually harmonious on other doctrines and usages, are not agreed on the question of Feet Washing. The old Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois fathers—the Stinsons, the Lanes, Speer, Henry, Cavanah, Carlilse, and their compeers, did not practice it. The most of the Missouri Fathers, including some of the United and Flat Creek Associations in Indiana, believe in it. But, while there have been some friendly tilts over it, in private, there has never been any division or strife over it. Each association, and each church,

has been allowed freely to decide the matter for itself, without wish to Lord it over other brethren in this respect, and so it has never been a bone of contention among us, and probably never will be.

Without assuming to represent fully the views of either party, and without giving more than a bare outline of the arguments, the following are presented as among the considerations that influence the brethren, respectively, for and against.

I.—THE ARGUMENT FOR.

The advocates of Feet Washing first quote and emphasize John 13:12-17. "And supper being ended, the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself. After that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him. What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all. For he

knew who should betray him; therefore said he, ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them."

This is a plain, positive and unequivocal command of the Master, that as he washed their feet, so they also should wash one another's feet. It is even more specific and particular than the account given by Jesus of the institution of the sacrament, and the command is enforced with more directness and positiveness. It is difficult to understand how anything could be more imperative and unequivocal.

"If Jesus did not in his teaching and example intend to teach feet washing, then he certainly said one thing and meant another. How am I to know what Jesus meant upon any subject but by what he said? Are there any other ways of ascertaining what he means than by what he says? If he meant something else than what he said, will not a literal, common sense reading of the thirteenth chapter of John mislead men? Then is not the boast of Protestantism a falsehood, that the Bible, without note or comment from pope or priest, is a sufficient rule of faith and practice? Then is not Catholi-

cism correct when it declares the Bible is not for the people, and that the priests must interpret and explain?

"If Jesus did not intend to teach feet-washing, but something else unnamed, then how do we know but that he meant something else when he commanded the eating of bread and the drinking of wine in commemoration of his death? If in the one case he only intended to produce a mental condition, why not in the other? What gives the one a literal character any more than the other? How are we to determine but that he meant something very different when he commanded the apostles to baptize? If we dare allow the principle in this case that Jesus said one thing and meant another, then the whole book of God becomes a mystery, and not a revelation, and we have no certain resting place for our faith. But every candid reader must admit that Jesus performed the literal act of washing his disciples feet, and that that literal act constituted the subject of conversation between Jesus and his disciples. How men can find something in the teaching of Jesus so very different from what he says seems to me unaccountable upon any reasonable interpretation of scripture."*

"The scripture found in John 13, furnishes us with all the essential elements of an ordinance of religion. We find there the five elements which enter into all ceremonial rites. These are: 1. Divine institution, or the command of Christ. 2. The obligation of perpetual observance. 3. A sensuous element indicated, such as water, bread and wine, etc. 4. Formal ceremonial observance.

* George Sigler, D. D., on Feet-Washing, pp 12, 13.

5. An underlying truth upon which the rite rests, and which it symbolizes."*

"That there is a great truth underlying this ordinance is evident. This is true of all positive ordinances. They are symbolical, or representative, and the very fact that they are representative shows that they are necessarily literal. In the Lord's Supper, we have the death of Jesus, as well as the fact that our spiritual nature feeds on and lives by him thus represented. In baptism, we have Christ represented in his burial and resurrection, as well as the power by which we shall be raised from our graves. In the washing of feet, we have Christ in his humiliation and love, as well as our intercessor through whom we receive the grace to cleanse us from the contaminations of our pilgrimage through a sinful world. But, even if Jesus intended to teach a lesson of humility, did he not adopt the very best method when he required his disciples to imitate his example.

"The disciples were commanded to preach its observance. They were commanded to teach all things whatsoever he, (Christ,) commanded them. If they did not teach feet-washing, then they did not carry out the commission. The disciples preached the washing of feet. It was known and recognized as a condition of certain privileges in the church in the times of the apostles. 'Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children. if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet.' If it was not practiced as

* C. H. Forney, D. D., on The Christian Ordinances.

a church institution, why would a widow be debarred certain church privileges, if she had not washed the saints' feet!"

Then some of the Fathers testify to its existence in the early church. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, A. D. 374, advocating feet-washing, says:—"We are not ignorant that the church of Rome has not this custom. Behold, therefore, perhaps she has declined because of the multitude. There are some who endeavor to excuse her by the plea that this custom is not a sacred rite, but is simply to be done to our guests as a mark of hospitality." Augustine, of about the same time, refers to feet-washing as being then existing.

"The Christian world is inconsistent in retaining the literal communion and rejecting feet-washing, while the Quakers, who believe in spiritualizing the washing of feet, to be consistent must reject all formal ritual observances. The error of the Quaker is in spiritualizing all ordinances; the error of the other is in inconsistently spiritualizing one and retaining two in their literal sense. We prefer to apply the same principles of interpretation in all cases, and thus to follow the Lamb whithersoever he has led."*

"Brethren, those of you who have never observed this ordinance you have failed to receive the blessing that is connected with it. As there is a blessing in baptism to be had no where else, and a blessing connected with the Lord's Supper, and in prayer and song, to be had in no other way, so there is a blessing to be secured no where else than in feet-washing. Jesus said, 'If ye know these things,

* Dr. Forney.

happy are ye if ye do them.' I could call up hundreds who would say they have received a blessing every time they have observed 'these things,' and we need all the blessings we can get.

"If any of you continue to doubt the obligation to observe this ordinance, let me ask you to examine in connection with the Lord's Supper, as presented in the scriptures, and I feel very sure you will either accept it as binding, or conclude that the Lord's Supper must also be set aside. They must stand or fall together. They were joined together by the most sacred ties."*

II.—THE ARGUMENT AGAINST.

Those who do not recognize Feet Washing as an ordinance freely admit the command of the Master, in John 13:1-17. The question concerns its significance.

The Master commanded, Mat. 6:25, "Take no thought for your life," etc. Do we understand him exactly literally? So, Luke 14:33, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." How do we understand that—literally? Again, Mark 9:43, 45, 47. "If thy hand offend the, (or foot,) cut it off"—or "thine eye," "pluck it out." How many have cut off their hands, or plucked out their eyes? Luke 14:26, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." How many Christians are literally *hating* father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and their own lives also?

* Dr. Sigler.

Then Jesus said of the feet-washing—"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." There is no significance in this, if the command was intended to require a literal feet-washing ordinance. That would have been obvious enough, then and there. It needed no "hereafter" to reveal it. That it needed to wait for such hereafter for its understanding is therefore equivalent to saying that the surface meaning is not the real one, and that this command is to be classed along with other peculiar utterances of Jesus, that are not to be understood as meaning just what they literally say.

In line with this, is the silence of the New Testament and early Christian writers, as to any early observance of a feet-washing ordinance. While there are frequent and undisputed references to baptism and communion, save a disputed passage in Timothy, there is absolutely no reference to feet-washing for one hundred and fifty years, and no reliable one for two hundred and fifty. That it could have existed, on a parity with, and alongside of, the frequently mentioned baptism and communion, without any acknowledged record, in absolute non-recognition, is beyond reasonable belief.

As to the passage in 1 Tim. 5:9, 10, it is against, rather than in favor of a feet-washing ordinance. Paul is giving instructions concerning receiving widows on the roll of beneficiaries, and says:—"Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years, the wife of one man, well reported for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if

she have diligently followed every good work." Read the passage again, with just a little emphasis on "*every*," and you will perceive its real meaning. There is first the statement—"well reported for good works." Then there is an enumeration of some good works, including "has she washed the saints' feet?" Lest the enumeration be incomplete —as obviously it is—Paul adds, "If she have diligently followed *every* good work." There it is. Feet-washing is catalogued, twice repeated, as a good work, and not as an ordinance. So this passage testifies against feet-washing, instead of for it.

Evidently, therefore, the apostles did not understand Jesus to establish a feet-washing ordinance. John, who wrote the passage, and lived longer than any other apostle, writing the gospel, three epistles and the Revelation, is as silent as to its being an ordinance as all the rest. Obviously, the "hereafter" revealed to them all that it was not intended as an ordinance.

The first clear reference to feet-washing in ecclesiastical history is by Ambrose, of Milan, A. D. 374. He, however, virtually admits that he was in a small minority. Augustine and Tertullian mention it, about the same time. But it was rejected at Rome, and was condemned by a council at Elvira in Spain, and never gained any considerable foothold anywhere. The voice of the universal church, of all parties, catholic and protestant, and of all times, has been against it. Starting about the same time as trine immersion, and like it based upon an interpretation of the Savior's words, it has never secured so wide an observance as has it. If the Savior meant it as a universal or-

dinance of his church, along with baptism and communion, he obviously has failed of his purpose. The better conclusion is that he never intended it for such an ordinance.

Then feet-washing does not possess the elements of an ordinance. Defining ordinance by the acknowledged elements of baptism and communion, (and where can we get better definitions,) feet-washing cannot stand. The communion commemorates in symbol the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. Baptism proclaims in symbol the means by which that sacrifice, or atonement, was made—by Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and through them our death and burial to sin, and our resurrection to a new life. These acknowledged ordinances represent the cardinal doctrines of the gospel, the very marrow of salvation.

But, how about feet-washing? It symbolizes (represents) nothing. There is nothing in the gospel of which feet-washing is a scenic representation —as is the case with baptism and the communion. It is seldom that anything of the kind is asserted, and it is never backed-up with any convincing argument. It is generally said to *teach* humility. But teaching is a very different thing from symbolizing, and humility is only one of the ordinary graces of the gospel, and, if it have an ordinance to teach it, why not also each of the rest of its sister graces have one? And, what a coming down, from symbolizing, in scenic representation, the mighty mystery of God in Christ saving lost men, to simply teaching one of the Christian graces? No! Either communion and baptism have a divine surplusage, or feet-washing comes infinitely short of a Christian ordinance.

This accounts largely for the indefiniteness connected with the subject. Baptism and communion are administered by official hands, and it would seem that any ordinance ought to be. But feet-washing is not, and cannot well be. This alone practically sets it aside as an ordinance. Then the vagueness as to its object. Is it a symbol? Then, of what? If you say, of cleansing, Peter was right in assuming it to be insufficient. If that be it, then not my feet only, but the whole body, as in baptism. Is it an example? An ordinance is something more than a sample—of humility, or anything else. No wonder there is so much diversity of opinion about it.

Having shown pretty conclusively that feet-washing was not intended as an ordinance, the real work is done. It is not necessary to show what its real object is. But a suggestion may be ventured.

Feet washers generally assume that the feet-washing occurred in connection with the passover and the communion. But clearly it did not. John 13:1 distinctly says it was "before the feast of the passover," and so the "supper" could not have been either the passover or the communion. John really mentions neither the passover nor the communion. Turn back to the twelfth chapter, and you will find that Jesus was at Bethany "six days before the passover," and there, some time between that and the passover, they made him a supper, and Mary came in while they were eating, and anointen his feet with ointment and wiped them with her hair, whereat some indignation was expressed, while Jesus commended.

Now, may it not be that *this* was the time, "before the passover," when the "Supper being ended,"

and Mary had finished her anointing, and received her rebuke from Judas, and her commendation from the Master, that Jesus farther set the seal of his commendation upon her act, by himself in turn washing the feet of his disciples. Peter evidently, by his astonishment, and his questions, and his declarations, did not understand what Jesus was about—certainly did not comprehend that he was thereby especially commending an act of loyalty and of love to himself—commending it in the same way it was given, but would have commended it in some other way had it been given in some other way.

This would indicate that it was not the form but the nature of the act that was to be repeated, and which Peter and the rest undoubtedly understood better afterwards, than they did amid the puzzlements of that hour. "If ye know these things," that is, how important it is to render loving and sacrificing devotion to the Master, and how important it is to recognize and second all such services, "happy are ye if ye do them!"—and it is plural, not the single outward, ceremonial thing of feet-washing. Several of the points involved in the answers to Peter are obviously outside the main point in hand.

Was not the feet-washing simply a visible and emphatic commendation of Mary's act of love and the sacrifice of her precious pot of ointment, worth almost an old-time fortune?—a commendation to be commended and repeated in kind wherever such love and sacrifice are seen.

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